The Hidden Treasures of Sgam-po-gdar Mountain:
A History of the *Zhi-khro* Revelations of Karma-gling-pa
and the Making of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*

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Abstract

This is a historical study of an influential collection of Tibetan funerary texts which has long been popularized in America and Europe as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Until now the history of the Tibetan texts upon which this *book* was based has not been well documented, and hence the origin and diffusion of the Tibetan tradition has been understood only vaguely. The principal goal of the study was thus to document for the first time the manner in which the original collection had been articulated and transmitted within its own religious and social contexts.

It is demonstrated that the so-called *Book of the Dead* is actually a fluid compendium of related books from different historical periods reaching as far back as the fourteenth century. Ostensibly, the texts were designed for use in Tibetan Buddhist funeral rituals and describe the experiences to be expected at the moment of death, during a perilous and prolonged postmortem phase called *bardo*, and during the confused journey into a new existence. By the latter half of the fifteenth century, the core texts had been arranged and codified into a coherent liturgical program. Over time this ritual system was supplemented and adapted to meet the local demands of diverse communities, and was ultimately transmitted throughout Tibet and beyond her borders. The program eventually became one of the most pervasive forms of Tibetan Buddhist funeral liturgy.

It is concluded that the Tibetan texts accompanying this ritual service are actually derived from a single textual arrangement which was first standardized in the late seventeenth century. This standard version became the *editio princeps* of most of the subsequent Tibetan-language editions, and served as the basis for the first western-language translation in 1927 by Kazi Dawa Samdup and Walter Y. Evans-Wentz.

This work contributes to the study of broader aspects of the transmission of religious ideas, the production and distribution of religious texts, and the influence of institutions on religious practice within Tibet and surrounding regions.

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Acknowledgments

I was first introduced to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* as a fledgling undergraduate student in an "Oriental" philosophy class at Emory University in 1987. The professor of that course, Donald Phillip Verene, had inadvertently sparked within me a fascination with Tibet and Tibetan rituals for the dead and dying that would captivate me through my remaining college years and throughout my entire graduate career, although he is surely unaware of his influence in this regard. For this I am forever grateful.

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Technical Note

For rendering Tibetan into Roman script I have used the Wylie transcription system as described in Turrell Wylie, "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription", *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22 (1959): 261-267. Specialists should note that I capitalize initial letters only, not "foundation letters" (*ming-gzhi*), and follow standard English rules for the capitalization of titles, proper names, and so forth. In so doing, I have generally followed the methods outlined by Dan Martin in his *Tibetan Histories: A Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works*. London: Serindia Publications, 1997, pp. 20-21.

Introduction

The Saga of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*

No one scribe could have been its author and no one generation its creator; its history as a book, if completely known, could only be the history of its compilation and recording.

— W. Y. Evans-Wentz

A translated text is a new text, and a book which is republished in another culture is not the same book.

— Peter Burke

Sometime in early 1919, a British Political Officer and amateur Tibetan scholar named Major W. L. Campbell purchased a collection of Tibetan blockprints while visiting the town of Rgyal-rtse (Gyantse) in western Tibet. Upon returning to his station in Sikkim, he presented some of these texts to the American-born and Oxford-educated anthropologist Walter Yeeling Evans-Wentz (1878-1965).[1] At the end of that year, Evans-Wentz met the Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup (1868-1922), who was then the headmaster of the Maharaja's Boys School near Sgang-thog (Gangtok).[2] Evans-Wentz commissioned this lama to prepare an English translation of the Tibetan books he had acquired from Major Campbell. Included among these texts was a set of prints gathered under the title *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* [*Great Liberation upon Hearing in the Bardo*]. This collection—drawn from a much larger body of literature, the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* [*Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*]—was apparently

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[1] Biographical information on Evans-Wentz can be found in Winkler 1982.

[2] A brief biography of Kazi Dawa Samdup is provided in Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 80-81; Fields 1992, pp. 285-287. This lama had produced his own *Tibetan-English Dictionary* in 1919 (Snellgrove 1987, p. 155n.71), and had worked previously as translator for a number of notable personalities, including Alexandra David-Neel (1868-1969) (cf., David-Neel 1971, pp. 1-19; Foster 1998), Sir Charles Bell (1870-1945) (cf., Bell 1931, pp. 206-207; Aris 1979, p. xxxi), Sir John Woodroffe, alias Arthur Avalon (cf., Woodroffe 1919), and Major W. L. Campbell (cf., Evans-Wentz 1969, p. 24).

of singular interest to both parties. For the next two months, Dawa Samdup worked through the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, with Evans-Wentz close at his side, and together they produced a draft of what would later become the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*—arguably the most famous and widely read work of Tibetan literature in America and Europe.

It has almost been a century since its first publication in 1927 and popular enthusiasm for the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* seems to have grown increasingly stronger, such that we now have at least eight major translations from Tibetan, with the promise of more in the making.[3] The book has also inspired a handful of traditional studies and scholarly commentaries,[4] as well as a video series,[5] an adapted script for a dramatic play,[6] and even a libretto for a musical opera.[7] This proliferation of multiple voices commenting on the text-in-translation has created a singular phenomenon that was never known in Tibet. The remarkable fame of this book in the west is disproportionate to how the original Tibetan texts were perceived in their own country.[8] In fact, as Donald Lopez recently observed, the *Book of the Dead* "has been made to serve wide-ranging agendas in various fields of use, agendas that have far more to do with the twentieth-century cultural fashions of Europe and America than with how the text has been used over the centuries of its history

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[3]In addition to the Evans-Wentz and Kazi Dawa Samdup 1919 translation (Evans-Wentz 1960), there have been the translations of Giuseppe Tucci of 1949 (Tucci 1972), Eva Dargyay of 1977 (Dargyay 1991), György Kara (Kara 1986), Chogyam Trungpa (Fremantle and Trungpa 1975), Robert Thurman (Thurman 1994), Ramon Prats (Prats 1996), and most recently, Stephen Hodge and Martin Boord (Hodge and Boord 1999). Gyurme Dorje has also announced a new translation which is forthcoming from Penguin Books (e-mail communication of May 13, 1999).

[4]Among which, we should note Lati Rinbochay and Hopkins 1979; Lama Lodrö 1982; Tsele Natsok Rangdrol 1987; J. Reynolds 1989; Chökyi Nyima Rinpoche 1991; Sogyal Rinpoche 1992; Trungpa 1992; Tenga Rinpoche 1996; Gyatrul Rinpoche and Wallace 1998. Of the scholarly works see, for example, Lauf 1977; Back 1979 and 1987; Blezer 1997.

[5]Mori et al 1994.

[6]van Itallie 1998.

[7]Gorn 1983.

[8]In this regard, Eva Dargyay had already noted that "c'est le mérite incontestable d'Evans-Wentz d'avoir rendu le Bardo Thödol plus célèbre en Occident qu'il ne l'était en Orient." Dargyay 1991, p. 42.

in Tibet".[9] But what is its history in Tibet? There have been many in the west who have claimed to speak for the text, to explain its ideas, and to expose its hidden meanings, but none of them have uttered a word about its history in Tibet.

The present study is a response to this important but neglected topic. In the chapters that follow, I attempt to piece together the unwritten history of this intriguing collection of texts, highlighting in particular how the *Bar-do thos-grol*—the so-called "Book(s) of the Dead"—were compiled, and telling the story of the lives of those who preserved and transmitted them. For the sake of clarity, throughout my presentation I will refer to the actual Tibetan texts by some variation of the title *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. I will use the contrived English title, *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, to refer only to the western-language editions of the Tibetan collection.[10] In the end, I hope to demonstrate that the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* in the form we know it today, as well as the *Bar-do thos-grol* upon which it is based, was actually derived from a single Tibetan textual tradition—an example of which was represented in Major Campbell's gift to Evans-Wentz. This tradition which reached back to the late fourteenth century was eventually standardized at the end of the seventeenth century by a controversial sorcerer from eastern Tibet named Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (1647-1710). Surprisingly, this fact has never been acknowledged in the secondary literature. Nyi-ma-grags-pa's version of the *Bar-do thos-grol* became the *editio princeps* of most of the subsequent Tibetan-language editions, and

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[9]Lopez 1998, p. 47. I do not wish to suggest, however, that the proliferation of multiple commentarial voices was confined solely to Europe and America. Tibetans themselves have long possessed great skill in creative elaboration and imaginative invention in matters of textual interpretation. Lopez's position on this issue has been the subject of some criticism—most recently by David Germano in a forthcoming review essay of *Prisoners of Shangri-la* entitled "Encountering Tibet: The Ethics, Soteriology and Creativity of Cross-Cultural Interpretation".

[10]Evans-Wentz was the one responsible for christening the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* with the title *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. He did this deliberately in order to convey "to the English reader the true character of the book as a whole". Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 2n.1. Evidently, he had chosen this particular title in hopes that it might be better recognized by a wider audience already captivated by the *Egyptian Book of the Dead*, which had been published much earlier in 1897. See Budge 1985.

served as the basis for the first western-language translation by Kazi Dawa Samdup and Walter Evans-Wentz.

The celebrated English work has gone through numerous reprints and translations into most major European languages, and has inspired over the years many new translations from the original Tibetan texts. The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* was notoriously instrumental in bringing Tibetan Buddhism to America and, in all its variant forms, has since become one of the foremost spiritual classics in world history. In this introduction we will examine the book's celebrity in the west, review its history in Tibet, and offer a few general comments about the scholarly methods employed and the task of writing history in Tibetan studies. Let us begin by considering those "wide-ranging agendas" this text has been made to serve.

1. WESTERN FANTASIES, SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

At the beginning of his lengthy introduction to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Evans-Wentz informed us that its translator, Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup, was cautious to avoid "misinterpretation and consequent misuse" of his translated Tibetan text, and thus he had requested that his explanatory notes be included with the translation.[11] Tragically, Dawa Samdup died in 1922 just a few years before Evans-Wentz had begun to collate the materials for publication. Evans-Wentz thus took it upon himself to "correlate and systematize and sometimes to expand the notes thus dictated". Over the course of several years, he reworked, edited, and composed a mass of notes to the surviving translation.

[11]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 1n.1: "This, he thought, would not only help to justify his translation, but, moreover, would accord with the wishes of his later *guru* with respect to all translations into a European tongue of works expository of the esoteric lore of the Great Perfectionist School into which that *guru* had initiated him". That *guru* was a certain Bhutanese lama named Slob-dpon Mtshams-pa-nor-bu and the Great Perfectionist School to which he ascribed is, of course, the Rdzogs-chen tradition. I have not yet identified this Mtshams-pa-nor-bu, but we will have much to say about his School and its relationship to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* in Chapter 1.

His comments were drawn less from Tibetan Buddhist traditions—with which he was really only vaguely familiar—and more from his own Spiritualist leanings and early twentieth-century intellectual prejudices. With his truly idiosyncratic interpretations of Dawa Samdup's text (pervading every part of its published version), Evans-Wentz both inaugurated and authorized in one fell swoop a distinctive style and method of commentarial tradition that would mark the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* throughout its many lives in western popular culture. Strangely enough, even academic specialists in Tibetan studies have not escaped the intoxicating power of Evans-Wentz's romance.[12]

How was he able to do this? Why was his book (and the later versions that it inspired) so appealing? Why does the *Book of the Dead* continue to attract the attention of both popular and scholarly audiences? I believe the answers lie in how the book has been presented to the west, and the remarkable ways in which its meaning and significance have been shifted to accomodate the interests and concerns of each new generation. But, as Peter Burke declared in our opening quote, the translated *Book of the Dead* is not the same as the *book* on which it is based, the Tibetan *Bar-do thos-grol*. To be sure, each new and creative presentation of this text has been, in spite of Dawa Samdup's early warning, "peculiarly liable to misinterpretation and consequent misuse". This tendency for misinterpretation has been caused for the most part by a misunderstanding, or perhaps

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[12]It has never been acknowledged openly that most scholars who have written on the topic of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*—although occasionally working from the original source materials—have tended to base their interpretations upon long-outdated and uncritical secondary opinion. Oddly enough, Evans-Wentz's book, and the successive generations of commentaries and new translations that it inspired, has remained the standard point of reference for most experts. It is certainly remarkable that even today there are Tibetan scholars who continue to cite as principal sources the popular secondary work on the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*—this in spite of the fact that on other topics the very same scholars are usually quite rigorous in supporting their arguments with extensive reference to primary literature. As examples, I should cite Snellgrove 1987, p. 453; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991 (Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein), vol. 2, p. 76n.1072; Samuel 1993, pp. 210, 515-516; Gyatso 1998, p. 293n.16; Lopez 1998, p.233n.6. Why is this popular literature accepted so uncritically as a valid and authoritative source of evidence? Surely, the fact that there have been far too few critical studies of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and related topics must be at least part of the answer. It is my hope that scholars in the future will begin to take this literature more seriously and examine it with more scholarly precision.

even willful ignorance, of the actual context of the text. As Per Kvaerne has correctly noted,

> "[the] ritual use of the text is well-known; yet in the West it has too often been presented as a *literary* text, even as a kind of psychological document. This it no doubt may be; yet it must be clearly understood that outside of the ritual context the text has no function at all in Tibetan religion."[13]

Western misappropriations of the *Bar-do thos-grol* are not the focus of the present study, although I do feel it necessary to highlight at the beginning some of the key facets of the translated book's peculiar legacy over the past seventy-two years, particularly in America. My aim in this effort is simply to demonstrate that in most incarnations of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, no matter how unique, each of its compositors have all shared uncritically the assumption that the book communicates an ancient and universal truth.[14] With few exceptions, this presupposition has led problematically to a homogenized understanding of the Tibetan text(s) that has been typically universalist and ahistorical. It is my hope that by the end of this brief discussion the reasons become more obvious, though no less regrettable, why a sufficient history of these Tibetan texts has yet to appear in the secondary literature.

We can begin to understand the appeal of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* if we first recognize that the book has been presented consistently as "a powerful symbol of highly organized spiritual attainments, an affirmation of a pure spiritual science".[15] This

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[13]See Brauen and Kvaerne 1978c, p. 10.

[14]Consider, for example, the following declaration so emblematic of this presupposition as to appear generic. The statement is by Michael Lord in his "Introduction to the Causeway Edition" (1973), a reprint of Evans-Wentz 1927: "There is a mechanism in the purified individual which expands the consciousness to share an ever-present ocean of truth and wisdom infinitely beyond the limitations of a single brain and senses. In ancient times this was the prime means of knowledge, and provided mankind with an unexcelled wisdom. The divine inspirations of the great sages and religious geniuses of the past have been recorded in sacred scriptures like the present work."

[15]Bishop 1993, p. 73.

"spiritual science"—a term adopted with some fervor by Robert Thurman—is believed to have ancient roots in Tibet. Through proper initiation into its mysteries, it is thought to provide access to a persistent and universal wisdom. Each new "author" of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* has claimed for him or herself the authority to introduce us to this hidden truth concealed behind the words of the text. In most cases, each of them have resorted to what Lopez has termed "the trope of the esoteric meaning", in which at least two layers of meaning are assumed: one which is literal, the "exoteric", and another which is symbolic, the "esoteric".[16] It is the latter, of course, which is considered correct by those who know the truth. We should make clear that Lopez's distinction echoes a traditional and long-standing Buddhist trope, in which scriptures are divided between those texts which are to be interpreted (*neyārtha*, *drang-don*) and those which are to be taken literally (*nīthārtha*, *nges-don*).[17] Truth in both tropes is contingent, however, upon the goals and impressions of its beholder. In my mind, there have been three basic "truths", or "orientations to truth", that have compelled specialists and non-specialists alike to comment on the "real" meaning of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and that in turn have attracted legions of devoted readers. In the most basic terms, these are the *scientific*, the *psychological*, and the *humanistic*. Generally speaking, the first approach seeks a rational and empirically verifiable foundation; the second insists on a symbolic and archetypal reality; and the third pursues the promise of the individual's capacity for self-transformation. Principal examples of each of these three will be considered below.

The first perspective was fully formulated in the pages of Evans-Wentz's introduction of 1927, and subsequently gained widespread assent among scholars and enthusiasts of

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[16]Lopez 1998, p. 72.

[17]For further discussion see, for example, the essays collected in Lopez 1988. This twofold Buddhist hermeneutical "trope" can be traced as far back as the *Saṃdhinirmocana-sūtra*. See Snellgrove 1987, pp. 94-95; Williams 1989, pp. 78-80.

the *Tibetan Book of the Dead.* Perhaps it can be best summed up in the following statement:

> "In other words, the *Bardo Thödol* seems to be based upon verifiable data of human physiological and psychological experiences; and it views the problem of the after-death state as being purely a psycho-physical problem; and is, therefore, in the main, scientific."[18]

Once uttered, this idea that the *Book of the Dead* offered a verifiable "science of death" was forged permanently into something on the order of a fundamental proposition, an underlying presupposition which was never again called into question. From that point on, subsequent generations of commentators would hold firm to this proposition, in one form or another. Evans-Wentz, however, was the most vigorously extreme in his attempts to substantiate this point. Nowhere is this more clear than in his discussion of reincarnation.

Inspired by the Spiritualist ideas of Madame Blavatsky (1831-1891), founder of the Theosophical Society, Evans-Wentz interpreted the doctrine of rebirth—which he declared to be the fundamental principle of the *Book of the Dead*—in light of a semi-Darwinist theory of genetic and biological evolution.[19] Under the spell of this peculiar breed of scientific rationalism, he argued vehemently against Buddhism that humans

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[18]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 34.

[19]In this period, any explanatory model founded upon Darwin's evolutionary premises was for the most part openly supported as self-evidently correct. Blavatsky was perhaps an exception to this general rule, for apparently she was opposed to Darwin—whom she labelled her "baboon". Washington 1995, p. 45. But even she, it appears, could not escape the appeal of the evolutionary model. See discussion in Lopez 1998, pp. 49-52. Actually, much of Evans-Wentz's evolutionary focus rested upon the authority of the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917). See Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 59-60. It was Tylor's intention to demonstrate the continuity of human culture by proving the theory that civilization was the result of a gradual process of growth, adaptation, and evolution, from an origial primitive state to one of increased complexity, such as that witnessed in the societies of modern Europe. This theory of the progress of human development had a profound effect on the work of the infamous James Frazer (1854-1941).

could only be reincarnated as humans, animals as animals, and so forth. This, he proclaimed, was the true, or "esoteric", interpretation of the traditional "exoteric" Buddhist doctrine.[20] He asserted further that since it is only the esoteric teaching that communicates a universal truth,[21] the exoteric viewpoint should be dismissed as irrational, nothing more than popular misunderstanding.[22] Central to this standpoint was the notion of the corrupt text:

> "Similarly, as the popular interpretation appears to have fundamentally shaped the *Jātaka*, so it may have also affected the compilation of the *Bardo Thödol*; for like all treatises which have had at least a germ-origin in very ancient times and then grown up by the ordinary process of amalgamating congenial material, the *Bardo Thödol*, as a Doctrine of Death and Rebirth, seems to have existed at first unrecorded, like almost all sacred books now recorded in Pali, Sanskrit, or Tibetan, and was a growth of unknown centuries. Then by the time it had fully developed and been set down in writing no doubt it had lost something of its primitive purity. By its very nature and religious usage, the *Bardo Thödol* would have been very susceptible to the influence of the popular or exoteric view; and in our own opinion it did fall under it, in such manner as to attempt the impossible, namely, the harmonizing of the two interpretations. Nevertheless, its original esotericism is still discernible and predominant."[23]

The principle that we see Evans-Wentz arguing for in this statement required acceptance of a broad theory of cultural corruption, popular among intellectuals of the nineteenth-

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[20]Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 42-43.

[21]See Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 43: "As to the processes affecting the life-flux which the human eye cannot see, the esoteric teaching coincides with that of the ancient Greek and Egyptian mystics: 'As below, so above'; which implies that there is one harmonious *karmic* law governing with unwavering and impartial justice the visible as well as the invisible operations of nature."

[22]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 59.

[23]Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 54-55.

century, that assumed a pure pristine origin of religious truth which over the course of time became gradually polluted by popular and misguided beliefs.[24] Here, Evans-Wentz asserted that the first step in this process of degeneration occured when the truth was set down in writing, and that subsequent transmissions of the written word produced layers upon layers of corruption which buried the "primitive purity" of the original. He saw as his primary goal, therefore, the revelation of the hidden truth, the esoteric meaning conveyed within the texts. In exposing this truth, he deliberately ignored, and many times condemned, the actual character and function of the texts themselves. His efforts were thus divorced from any historical interest whatsoever. Needless to say, the pursuit of universals has almost always superseded concern for particulars. To Evans-Wentz, then, it is not difficult to see just how truly insignificant considerations of historical context and of the history of the *Bar-do thos-grol* must have appeared. Although we could certainly offer additional criticisms of Evans-Wentz's approach, we must stay close to our focus and forge ahead.[25]

A more recent example of the scientific approach to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is found in the translation-study published by Robert Thurman (1994). Thurman's orientation represented a peculiar hybrid of the two approaches that I have termed scientific and humanistic.

> "It is important to understand the inner scientific dimension of the *Book of Natural Liberation Through Understanding in the Between* [*Bar-do thos-grol*],

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[24]This was typical of the view of Victorian scholars regarding the history of Buddhism in India, and particularly of Tantrism, which was seen as the final stage in the utter degeneration of "original Buddhism". The work of L. Austine Waddell (1854-1938) serves as a fine example of such views (Waddell 1972, p. 15): "Such was the distorted form of Buddhism introduced into Tibet about 640 A.D.; and during the three or four succeeding centuries Indian Buddhism became still more debased. Its mysticism became a silly mummery of unmeaning jargon and 'magic circles', dignified by the title of *Mantrayāna* or 'The Spell-Vehicle'; and this so-called 'esoteric,', but properly 'exoteric,' cult was given a respectable antiquity..."

[25]For insightful criticisms of Evans-Wentz, see Reynolds 1989, pp. 71-115; Bishop 1993, pp. 53-76; Lopez 1998, pp. 46-57 and 63-71.

> in order to approach it practically and use it effectively. The original is useful to Tibetans in two main ways. First, it is considered a scientific handbook on the realities and experiences of death... Second, it is considered a guidebook for spiritual practice on two levels: It helps the yogi and yogini develop the abilities they need to traverse the death crisis with skill and confidence; and it gives those who feel unable to prepare fully for death, and are not confident of their abilities, a religious sense of how to seek help from enlightened divine and angelic beings."[26]

Unlike Evans-Wentz, who was satisfied merely to uncover the pure scientific truth of the translated text, Thurman was interested also in its practical uses. For Thurman, the appeal of the book's "science of death" lay in its promise of empirically verifiable techniques for cultivating the "art of dying".[27] He held firm to his faith in the text's status as both a "scientific handbook" and a "guidebook for spiritual practice". As such, the Tibetan text, he seemed to believe, provided not only access to a universal wisdom, but also a systematic technology that could be utilized by any seeker of spiritual truth.[28] Thurman's fervent acceptance of this book as a pure and boundless document of Tibet's ancient "Mind Science" sustained the generalist perspectives of his predecessors. His overt nostalgia for lost wisdom and peaceful ages long past exposed a not-so latent romantic "new-age" orientalism that forced him to make simplistic statements on the order of a "we-they" duality and tended to deaden his ability to recognize the complex network of social and political forces that helped construct the Tibetan texts that he had translated.[29]

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[26]Thurman 1994, p. 51.
[27]Thurman 1994, p. 33.
[28]Thurman 1994, p. 81.
[29]With this in mind, consider Thurman's comments about the differences between Tibetan and Western civilization (Thurman 1994, p. 11): "The modern Tibetan character complex shares the modern traits of individualism, openness and flexibility of identity, reflectiveness, and rationality. But the Tibetan character is bound up with its peculiar perception, derived from Buddhist civilization, of all things as infused with spiritual value, as interconnected with mental states. In contrast to Western ideas, the

In the third edition of Evans-Wentz's *Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1957), Carl G. Jung's 1938 "Psychological Commentary" appeared in English for the first time.[30] This insightful essay not only attracted the attention of the wider intellectual community but also generated considerable interest in non-academic circles. It would come to have an enormous impact on all future interpretations of the Tibetan texts, such as those offered by Lama Anagarika Govinda (1898-1985), Chögyam Trungpa (1939-1987), and Detlef Ingo Lauf. Here, Jung had boldly announced: "The *Bardo Thödol* is in the highest degree psychological in its outlook".[31] From there he proceeded to describe in some detail the great psychological truths conveyed in Dawa Samdup's translated text. Remarkably, he seems to have succeeded in pressing some of the Tibetan concepts into his service, which thereby appeared to authorize or substantiate his own theories.[32] Thus, for instance, in these pages we read less about the implicit truths of karma, or of the three Tibetan *bardos* (postmortem states), and more about Jung's notions of "psychic heredity", "archetypes", "delusions of consciousness", and the "collective unconscious". For Jung, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* provided access to the universal structures of the human psyche and was significant only inasmuch as it validated his own psychological propositions. We can hardly be surprised, then, that Jung's descriptive approach neither took time nor history into account, nor even the specific contexts to which the Tibetan texts belonged. To his credit, however, Jung did recognize that his unique interpretation of the translated *Book of the Dead* did not match precisely how the Tibetan *Bar-do thos-grol* was perceived in Tibet.

Tibetan view is that the mental or spiritual cannot always be reduced to material quanta and manipulated as such—the spiritual is itself an active energy in nature, subtle but more powerful than the material. The Tibetan view is that the 'strong force' in nature is spiritual, not material. This is what gives the Tibetan character its "inwardness". Thus while Western and Tibetan personalities share the complex of modernity of consciousness, they are diametrically opposed in outlook, one focused on matter and the other inward on mind."

[30]Jung's commentary originally appeared in the Swiss edition of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, entitled *Das Tibetanische Totenbuch* (Zurich: Rascher Verlag).

[31]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. xxxvii.

[32]For a critique of Jung's interpretation of Asian ideas, see Gómez 1995.

> "The reversal of the order of the chapters, which I have suggested here as an aid to understanding, in no way accords with the original intention of the *Bardo Thödol*. Nor is the psychological use we make of it anything but a secondary intention, though one that is possibly sanctioned by *lāmaist* custom. The real purpose of this singular book is the attempt, which must seem very strange to the educated European of the twentieth century, to enlighten the dead on their journey through the regions of the *Bardo*."[33]

This praiseworthy sentiment seems to have been lost on Lama Govinda, who also followed a psychological orientation in his "Introductory Forward" included in the 1957 Evans-Wentz edition. It was here that Govinda rehearsed the themes that would form the basis of his popular study of the symbolic, acoustic, and geometric systems of Tibetan tantra—his *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (1969). In his commentary on the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, he declared that it was "a key to the innermost recesses of the human mind, and a guide for initiates, and for those who are seeking the spiritual path of liberation".[34] Govinda seems to have espoused a viewpoint similar to the one cultivated decades later by Thurman. But unlike Thurman, Govinda was critical of those (namely, Tibetans) who had not recognized the true meaning of the Tibetan texts. With such remarkable conceit, he argued that, despite well-established Tibetan custom, the *Bar-do thos-grol* was not actually addressed to the dead and dying, and that the expression "liberation upon hearing" (*thos-grol*) in the Tibetan title did not really mean what it said. These mistaken ideas, he explained, arose from an ignorance of some ancient universal code of initiation—a code, we might add, that was probably known only by a few obscure anthropologists of the nineteenth century.[35] It is really quite astounding just how

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[33]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. xlix.
[34]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. lix.
[35]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. lix.

far Govinda tried to push his universalist (and orientalist) agenda. In his hands the *Bar-do thos-grol* appeared to lose its very identity as a Tibetan work. The fact that this German-born bohemian never knew Tibetan and was thus forced to base his ideas solely upon western-language sources might explain his radically decontextualized perspective.

The 1975 translation and commentary by Francesca Fremantle and Chögyam Trungpa represents a third example of the psychological approach to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Based on lectures presented at Trungpa's own Buddhist institute in Vermont, this edition of the translated texts bears the distinctive imprint of its author's peculiar blend of American counter-culture individualism and Tibetan Buddhist orthodox conservatism. It is clear that Trungpa's commentary owes a debt to Carl Jung, who we have noted was the first in Europe to suggest that the *Book of the Dead* could be interpreted in purely western psychological terms. Trungpa argued that the postmortem experiences described in this book should be understood as part of the individual's basic psychological make-up as defined strictly within the Euro-American discipline of psychotherapy, as opposed to traditional Buddhist categories.[36] Thus, it was held that the concepts of the text were best described using terms borrowed from modern psychoanalysis, such as *ego*, *neurosis*, *projection*, *paranoia*, and so forth. "In other words, the whole thing is based on another way of looking at the psychological picture of ourselves".[37] As we might guess, this study's greatest virtue is perhaps its ability to convey Trungpa's eccentric vision of the *Book of the Dead* in a free-flowing and evocative style unburdened by the cumbersome and quasi-Biblical language of the earlier Evans-Wentz edition. However, what Trungpa's text made up for in style it surely lost in critical integrity. No attempt is made to step outside the network of ideas at play in the language of the translation itself. Consequently,

[36]Fremantle and Trungpa 1975, p. 1.
[37]Fremantle and Trungpa 1975, p. 2.

the book does little to illuminate the specific contexts—either cultural or historical—from which such ideas emerged.

A second study of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* also appeared in 1975. This was a German study by Detlef Ingo Lauf entitled *Geheimlehren tibetischer Totenbücher*, which was subsequently translated into English in 1977 as *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Books of the Dead*. On the surface, Lauf's book appeared to mirror the work of Lama Govinda in that both authors had similarly attempted to elaborate the complex symbol systems operating within the whole of Tibetan tantra. Moreover, both drew upon a similar psychological vocabulary. But upon closer inspection, Lauf's study proved itself a more rigorous and insightful work—no doubt, in part, the result of the author's ability to read the actual language of the texts. Lauf began his study with a refreshing survey of the various textual traditions of the Tibetan "Books of the Dead". He then devoted much of the remaining sections to a detailed analysis of the basic conceptual components at work in those books, including a valuable overview of their attendant rituals. From there he offered comparative analysis and attempted to establish shared patterns of congruence and conformity between the Tibetan traditions and those of the ancient civilizations of India, Egypt, Persia, Greece, and Rome. This section—his most problematic—seemed to echo the prior concerns of Evans-Wentz, who had seriously suggested the possibility of common origins.[38] Such an approach is by nature generalist and ahistorical, and is almost always subject to some dubious maneuver. Nevertheless, despite these weaknesses,

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[38]See Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 35. This quest for common origins was the hallmark of the early twentieth-century comparative mythologists such as Georges Dumézil. Basic to Dumézil's method was the fundamental proposition that similarities point to common origin, which meant that myths, religious narratives, and so forth, were best interpreted in terms of the extent to which they reflect common ideologies. This method has been criticized primarily for its lack of historical sensitivity. Such a method can be seen as "historical" only to the extent that it employs written sources to investigate a specific and localizable past body of myth and social narrative, but the approach is ultimately generalist and universalizing in that its historical analyses are utilized to reconstruct common prototypes or protopatterns, regardless of specific context, through comparative evaluation of linguistic, mythic, and socio-cultural data. For further details, see Dumézil 1973; Lincoln 1981; Littleton 1982; cf. also the critique of Dumézil in Puhvel 1987.

Lauf's study has remained a noteworthy introduction to many of the key ideas and symbols found in the traditions of the *Bar-do thos-grol*.

I should now explain what I mean by the "humanistic orientation". As noted above, a humanistic approach to these Tibetan traditions is one that has typically pursued the promise of an individual's capacity for self-transformation. It is, therefore, centered on the interests of the human individual, with an emphasis on a non-theistic spirituality. Here, the term "spirituality" refers very specifically to a relatively modern phenomenon. Lopez has offered a basic definition:

> "'Spiritual' no longer refers to contact and communication with the spirits of the dead. Instead it evokes an ethos beyond the confines of the merely religious, pointing back to that which was the original life blood of religious traditions but was ultimately free from them, confined as they were by institution and by history. The spiritual was instead at once both universal and personal, accessible not only through the experiences of the mystics of the great 'world religions' but also, perhaps in a more pristine form, through Asian traditions or through shamanism, nature worship, or the cult of the goddess, what was once regarded as primitive."

As we can see, the spirituality perspective tends to stress several key principles that are reminiscent of some of the views held by intellectuals of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century such as Evans-Wentz, for example. This basic viewpoint attempts to establish connections between notions of an original, pure, and universal religious essence, "uncontaminated by wordliness" (to use one of Peter Bishop's phrases), and the privitized experiences of the individual. It is in such light that this perspective can be properly described as humanistic. Needless to say, the driving ambition of those who

adopt such a view is not to achieve some higher awareness of the particulars of historical context. Far from it, the primary objective is personal awareness and the discovery of techniques for self-transformation. Indeed, as Govinda has noted, "it is the spiritual point of view that makes" the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* "so important for the majority of its readers."[39] Humanistic interpretations of this book have been distinguished clearly by the purposes expressed by their authors. In every case, the aim has been to produce ever more accessible versions of the text for those who wish to benefit from the trials and errors of "ancient" tradition. In terms of form and content, these versions have tended to avoid academic styles that are generally perceived as unnecessarily obscurantist—say, for example, scholarly footnotes. In addition, the translation of the Tibetan texts have often been accompanied by the oral commentaries of contemporary Tibetan lamas. The whole point, it appears, has been to present, in the clearest possible terms, an easy-to-read and tradition-authorized "guidebook for spiritual practice".

Several of the studies already discussed might be better suited for this humanistic category. I am thinking specifically of the translations of Trungpa and Thurman. But other examples not considered might also be included, for example, Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner, and Richard Alpert, *The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1964);[40] Eva K. Dargyay, *Das tibetische Buch der Toten* (1977);[41] John Myrdhin Reynolds, *Self-Liberation Through Seeing with Naked*

[39]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. lix.

[40]After the commonly held belief that many of Asia's revered scriptures could be ulitized most effectively here in the west by replacing their sacred images with western ones, former Harvard psychology professors Leary, Metzner, and Alpert (alias Ram Dass), early enthusiasts of the 1960's counter-culture, took Evans-Wentz's *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and presented it as a guidebook for the LSD experience, complete with descriptions of the psychedelic psychodrama of ego-death, a "trip" through a kaleidoscopic limbo (*bardo*), and a sobering return (rebirth) to the everyday world. As we might expect, this book did little to clarify traditional Tibetan interpretations of the *Book of the Dead*, but did succeed in generating a perennial fascination for this and other related Tibetan texts among a rising generation of young American truth-seekers. For further comments and criticisms of *The Psychedelic Experience*, see Lopez 1998, pp. 71-76.

[41]Translated into French as *Bardo-Thödol: Le Livre tibétain des Morts*. It is this edition which I have consulted. Dargyay's book was written in collaboration with Geshe Lobsang Dargyay and included a

Awareness (1989);[42] Ramon Prats, *El libro de los muertos tibetano* (1996);[43] B. Allan Wallace, *Natural Liberation: Padmasambhava's Teachings on the Six Bardos* (1998);[44] and, Stephen Hodge and Martin Boord, *The Illustrated Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1999).[45] Although each of these studies are distinctive in their own right, they all share a common conviction, which is perhaps best expressed in the old words of Lama Govinda:

> "Under the guise of the science of death, the *Bardo Thödol* reveals the secret of life; and therein lies its spiritual value and its universal appeal."[46]

As I see it, the main problem with this approach—and also equally with that of the scientific and psychological—is that its followers have been too apt to neglect the actual Tibetan texts upon which their studies have been based. The truth is that these texts were produced, and continue to be produced, within very specific contexts, which is to say that these textual traditions have had "a place within the mess, confusions and power struggles of social life".[47] More to the point, these texts have a history, and that history, with only slight exception, has not been sufficiently documented in the secondary literature. The main reason a history of the *Bar-do thos-grol* has not yet been written should be clear by now. Previous approaches to the Tibetan materials have been primarily content or doctrine oriented, and the proponents of these positions have typically adopted a methodological

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preface by Lama Govinda. It is perhaps relevant that in Dargyay's introduction she would evoke the trope of the esoteric meaning (Dargyay 1991, p. 42): "Cette nouvelle traduction présentée ici devrait permettre d'avoir en mains un texte lisible et compréhensible, transmettant le sens implicite du texte original, s'écartant le moins possible du mot tibétain."

[42]This is a translation of Karma-gling-pa's *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol*, which is included in several Tibetan editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. See Chapter 2. Reynolds's book includes a forward by Namkhai Norbu.

[43]My thanks to Ramon Prats for sending me a photocopy of his book.

[44]A translation of the obscure *Bar-do drug-gi khrid-yig* and several other texts belonging to the larger Kar-gling literary cycle. We will have much to say about these Tibetan works, and particularly the *Bar-do khrid-yig*, in the chapters that follow. Wallace's translation is accompanied by the oral commentary of Gyatrul Rinpoche.

[45]This most recent translation is without doubt the most colorful edition yet to appear.

[46]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. lxiii.

[47]Bishop 1993, p. 73.

stance which is by nature generalist and universalizing. At the risk of sounding overly dramatic, that standpoint has had a devastating effect on the study of the history of the Tibetan texts themselves.

We should note with some interest, however, that there have been some exceptions to this general rule—namely, the early translation-study of Giuseppe Tucci, *Il libro tibetano dei morti—Bardo Tödöl* (1949 and 1972); the philological studies of Dieter Michael Back, *Eine buddhistische jenseitsreise* (1979) and *Rig pa ṅo sprod gcer mthoṅ raṅ grol: Die Erkenntnislehre des Bar do thos grol* (1987); and the recent conceptual history of Henk Blezer, *Kar gliṅ Zi khro: A Tantric Buddhist Concept* (1997). A few brief comments about these works are in order. First, we have Giuseppe Tucci (1894-1984), one of the century's foremost Tibetologists. Tucci was the first to recognize the importance of establishing the history of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. It is indeed remarkable that at such an early date, he was already quite aware of some of the potential problems confronting the would-be textual historian. For example, in his introduction, he rightly observed that the history of the compilation of this "Tibetan book" was a rather complicated affair. As he noted, the texts had been compiled gradually from a mix of locally determined materials of uncertain origin, all reflecting the varied interests of individual schools and monasteries. It would be the task of future scholars to work out the chronology of these textual layers.[48]

And, in fact, one of those future scholars was Dieter Michael Back. I will speak at greater length about Back's pioneering work in Chapter 2, but for now let me state simply that his research has been to date unprecedented. His two philological studies of some of the central texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* are noteworthy both for their extensive documentation and for their critical reflections on many of the historical complexities of

[48]See Tucci 1972, p. 77.

the textual collections themselves. Almost as if responding directly to Tucci's earlier call, Back would make a noble attempt at establishing the "basic structure" (Grundstruktur) of the original *Bar-do thos-grol*.[49] His major weakness, however, was his failure to clarify the actual historical circumstances involved in the compilation and transmission of the texts that made up this *book*. Unfortunately, what little history Back did consider he perceived through the lens of philology, which tended to flatten his perspective and to force him to make comparisons between historically unrelated ideas.

Henk Blezer's *Kar glin Zi khro* is the published version of his doctoral thesis defended at the Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden. It is, therefore, a purely academic work as only Ph.D. dissertations are prone to be. That aside, Blezer's meticulous study of the concepts at play in the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* is truly an impressive contribution to our knowledge of these materials. The broad focus of this book is the conceptual and historical relations between the Buddhist doctrine of postmortem transition (Skt., *antarābhava*, Tib., *bar-do*) and the Indo-Tibetan notion of a structured vision, or mandala, of peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-ba dang khro-bo'i lha-tshogs*). Blezer theorized that the relatively late conflation of these two concepts resulted in the creation of one of the two most prominent texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol*—the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* [*Recollection of the Bardo of Reality-Itself*].[50] To support this thesis, Blezer marshaled a formidable array of primary source materials (in Pali, Sanskrit, and Tibetan) and, with the precision of a well-seasoned philologist, set about analyzing the basic terminology of the texts in question. Blezer's method could be appropriately described, in the words of Dan Martin, as "a historicism framed along etymological lines and based in a careful chronological ordering of texts".[51] But, despite an apparent concern for history,

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[49]See Back 1987, pp. 5-19.
[50]See Blezer 1997, pp. 67-93.
[51]Martin 1998a, p. 106.

Blezer seemed to have stumbled over the same problem we observed in Dieter Back's work—a difficulty in fixing the proper chronology of the textual sources resulting from a tendency to overlook the social and cultural contexts in which they developed.

We see, then, that even in these exceptional cases, in which the authors profess a certain historical focus, lack of attention to the essential details of historical and social context has persisted. At the risk of oversimplification, it is my opinion that this has been a consistent and fundamental failure in every study of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, including that of Tucci, Back, and Blezer. In stating this, my criticism is not directed at what has been said about the ideas conveyed by the texts, but rather what has *not* been said about the texts themselves and the contexts in which they emerged. As the noted textual scholar G. Thomas Tanselle has remarked:

> "Critical sophistication in the extracting of meaning from words on a page can—and frequently does—coexist with the most uncritical attitude toward the document itself and the trustworthiness of its texts."[52]

The point here is that the artifact of the text, the nature (as it were) of the document itself, including more importantly the contexts to which it belongs, should be a principal, if not crucial, concern of those whose goal it is to comment on its meanings. Is it not true, in fact, that it is the physical text that provides the basis upon which critical interpretations are founded?

In the final analysis, we have seen that in every case the *Bar-do thos-grol*, and its western counterpart the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, has been approached from the sole perspective of its conceptual content; the typical assumption being that its content communicates some generalized and universal wisdom. Regrettably, this doctrine-oriented

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[52]Tanselle 1992, p. 16.

view has tended toward an implicit denial of the relevance of the text's history. We must work to recognize that the history of a given text has as much bearing on understanding its significance as does the wisdom of its words. The present study is thus intended as a response to historical indifference. It is my hope that such a shift in focus may help to bring a more balanced approach to the study of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and also of Tibetan literature in general. We should now turn our attention to the actual Tibetan texts.

2. THE TREASURES OF SGAM-PO-GDAR MOUNTAIN

Tradition attributes authorship of the *Bar-do thos-grol* to the eighth-century exorcist Padmasambhava, who hailed from the western region of O-rgyan or Uḍḍiyāna (referring generally to the direction of Persia).[53] This mysterious figure, according to legend, was invited to Tibet by the emperor Khri-srong-lde-btsan (late eighth century) in order to subdue the indigenous spirits who had been obstructing the efforts to bring Buddhism into the country. While in Tibet, Padmasambhava is believed to have concealed a vast array of religious "treasures", or *gter-ma*, in unusual and remote locations so that they could later be revealed at the appropriate time. Those who subsequently discovered these *gter-ma* were known as *gter-ston*, "treasure-revealer". Among the many famous excavators of Padmasambhava's hidden treasures was an obscure fourteenth-century mystic named Karma-gling-pa.

Karma-gling-pa was from the southeastern region of Dwags-po, an area renowned for its dense forests and fertile meadowlands.[54] This had been the birthplace of the eponymous Dwags-po Bka'-brgyud tradition founded by Sgam-po-pa (1079-1153). The

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[53]Situated roughly in the western direction of Jālandhara (Za-hor), Kashmir (Kha-che), and Gilgit (Bru-sha).

[54]Dwags-po and its surrounding territory is discussed by Uray 1988, pp. 1503-1510; Dorje 1996, pp. 285-287; Karmay 1998, pp. 211-227.

monastery he established in 1121, on the jagged ridges of the ancient Dwags-lha Sgam-po mountain range,[55] became the principal center for the religious practice of Mahāmudrā (*phyag-rgya-chen-po*)—a tradition that was actively maintained at this site (until 1718) by the successive generations of Sgam-po-pa's family and lineal descendants.[56] Legend proclaims it was within this very same mountain environment, on a small peak known as Sgam-po-gdar, that the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa unearthed a cache of scriptural treasures believed to have been concealed there six centuries earlier by Padmasambhava.[57] This *gter-ma* contained esoteric yoga teachings focused on a mandala of one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-khro*), and included detailed instructions on religious practices to be employed at the moment of death, during a perilous and prolonged postmortem phase called *bardo*, and during the confused journey into a new existence. As I argue in Chapter 1, its various combination of pieces originated in the separate Buddhist communities of India and in the Buddhist and non-Buddhist indigenous groups of Tibet over the span of several hundred years, from roughly the fifth through thirteenth centuries. These were Karma-gling-pa's textual revelations, a large literary cycle called *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and a smaller set of funerary texts collectively referred to as *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. We must be careful to make a clear distinction between these two collections since each of their respective transmission histories are rather unique. Unlike the multi-

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[55]Uray noted that this mountain was the sacred site of an ancient cult centered on the deity Dwags-lha Sgam-po, who is known from Tun-huang sources as the god of Dags-shul. See Uray 1988, p. 1506. Elsewhere we read that the mountain was variously referred to by the names Sgam-po Dpal-ri, Sgam-po-gangs, and Dag-lha Sgam-bu. Its chief deity was said to have been the ruler of all the *sa-bdag*, "earth-masters" of Dwags-po. See Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 221-223, 229. On mountain cults in Tibet, see especially Blondeau and Steinkellner 1996; Blondeau 1998; Huber 1999.

[56]In the year 1718, the monastery of Dwags-lha Sgam-po was destroyed by the Dzungar (Zung-ghar/Jung-'gar) Mongol armies led by Tshe-ring-don-grub. See Wylie 1962, pp. 94, 175n.559-561. A brief account of this monastery's abbatial succession can be found in GKCB, pp. 728-742 On the Dzungar invasions, see Petech 1972, pp. 29-30; Shakabpa 1984, esp. pp. 134-139; Smith 1996, pp. 123-126.

[57]The Sgam-po-gdar treasure site is said to have "resembled a dancing servant deity" (*lha-bran gar-byed-pa 'dra-ba*). There has been question as to whether this phrase refers to the name of the excavation site itself or simply to its description. According to the suggestion made by Geshe Phema Tsering (Bonn) to Dieter Back, the expression refers to two different size mountains, Sgam-po-gdar being the smaller of the two. In this regard, *lha-phran* is taken to mean "the smaller one of a divine pair". See Back 1987, p.10n.26.

stratified tradition of the former, there was apparently only a single lineage for the *Bar-do thos-grol*.

We know with some certainty that in the late fourteenth century the *gter-ma* of Karma-gling-pa originated in Dwags-po and that, for a relatively short period after its compilation, remained and was fostered in that general vicinity. The area of its earliest diffusion flowed slightly beyond Dwags-po to the north and east, in Long-po and Kong-po, respectively. The ritual significance of Kong-po, in particular, is indicated in the myths and legends of the origins of the Tibetan dynasty.[58] The first Tibetan emperors (*bstan-po*) were said to have descended from heaven by a special rope (*dmu-thag*), and at death, to have returned to heaven by that same rope, leaving behind no physical remains. It was only with the death of the eighth emperor, Gri-gum-btsan-po, that imperial corpses began to be left behind on earth.[59] After Gri-gum, the Tibetan kings were memorialized according to a newly prescribed funeral rite and subsequently buried in tombs.[60] Erik Haarh has interpreted the Gri-gum legend as a myth that preserved the memory of a monumental conflict between two indigenous Tibetan clans—the Bya-khri settled in Yar-lung, and the Nya-khri from Kong-po. Presumably, the former dynasty was defeated by the Kong-po tribes and eventually collapsed after the death of the last member of its imperial line.[61] The myth of Gri-gum's death points symbolically to this great political and cultural transition, the founding of the Tibetan dynasty, which had culminated with the introduction of an entirely new ritualized perspective on death and the dead. Although we must acknowledge that Haarh's historical reconstruction is highly speculative and based

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[58]Haarh 1969, p. 97.
[59]On the myth of Gri-gum-btsan-po in Buddhist records, see especially GLRB, pp. 55-57; Sorensen 1994, pp. 141-144; Sakyapa Sonam Gyaltsen 1996, pp. 82-83; and, in the Tun-huang documents, cf. Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979, pp. 21-31; Bacot 1940-1946, pp. 123-124; Haarh 1969, pp. 402-403; Gibson 1991, pp. 118-123.
[60]See Tucci 1950.
[61]See Haarh 1969, p. 18.

on fragmentary evidence, the link with Kong-po is important. It is certainly appropriate that the ancient cult of the dead is believed to have hailed originally from the vicinity of Kong-po, since we now know that it was also in this area that the famous funeral liturgy of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* tradition first blossomed. It was only after the institutionalization of its rituals in that same region—sometime in the late fifteenth century—that the Kar-gling revelations then found their way to other parts of Tibet.

Generally speaking, in the periods leading up to the fifteenth century, the transmission of religious teachings in Tibet was dominated in most cases by direct oral exchange between teachers and their individual disciples, and/or larger groups made up of pious laity. Since the religious education of the masses was generally quite low, the essential content of the teachings was rarely communicated to these audiences in writing or through public or private reading. The *book* in Tibet, when available, served a variety of ennobling purposes, the least of which was reading. The faith of the majority of Tibetans in this age was primarily expressed in a routine performance of rituals, and the *book* was itself a fundamental component of these rites as a physical embodiment of sacred power which, among other benefits, could protect against evil influences. For those wealthy enough to absorb the costs, moreover, the act of commissioning the copying of the *book* was itself a ritual designed to accrue merit and insure for its donor a positive future in this and the next life.[62] However, a select and comparatively limited group of Tibetan literati did utilize the *book* as a book for study, recitation, and/or memorization. Nonetheless, at every level we must bear in mind that the dominant form of the *book* in this period was the manuscript written by hand, and hence the physical text was a rather scarce and precious item. I think it is too easy and precarious a trap to approach the transmission of religious teaching in Tibet with a modern post-industrial

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[62] For a marvelous study of such uses of scripture in China, see Teiser 1994.

impression of a relatively high rate of literacy and of the widespread access of printed matter. The manuscript age in Tibetan history predominated until at least the year 1410 when the first woodblock print (xylograph) of the Buddhist *Bka'-'gyur* [*Translation of the Word*] was produced in Beijing.[63]

Some scholars have suggested that block printing in Tibet had not become a practical alternative to writing until the first half of the eighteenth century.[64] In light of this, we should emphasize that the *manuscript* was the primary means of transmission of religious content in Tibet prior to the eighteenth century and that only after this period did Tibetans yield gradually to the printed book. One of the more frustrating aspects of textual scholarship in Tibetan studies is that precious little of pre-xylographic age Tibetan literature has survived or is readily accessible. Save for the manuscript fragments recovered from Tun-huang (included in the Pelliot and Stein collections)[65] and the valuable private and public manuscript collections housed in repositories such as the British Library,[66] the Russian Academy of Sciences (St. Petersburg),[67] the Library of the Oriental Institute of Prague,[68] and the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin,[69] the vast majority of Tibetan literature has come down to us in the form of xylographic prints and reproductions from blocks carved only in the last two centuries.[70] We need to become

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[63]Snellgrove & Richardson 1986, p. 139 and 160; Harrison 1996, p. 81. In this regard, we should also note that, according to D.C. Greetham, "wood blocks in relief had been made by the Chinese" going back to at least 594 C.E, but actual block *books* did not appear until the mid-fifteenth century. See Greetham 1994, pp. 77 and 80.

[64]Skilling 1991, p. 138, commenting on the proliferation of printed editions of the *Bka'-'gyur* and *Bstan-'gyur* during this period. See also Mayer 1996, pp. 233-235 on the first xylographic print of the *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum* in the late eighteenth century (the Sde-dge edition).

[65]Lalou 1939-61; Macdonald and Imaeda 1978; Savitsky 1984.

[66]Denwood 1976; Pagel 1997

[67]Schmidt 1847; Pagel 1997.

[68]Kolmaś 1969.

[69]Schuh 1981, 1985.

[70]The United States Library of Congress (LC) collection of Tibetan literature, instituted under the directive of Public Law 480 (PL 480), is certainly the largest repository of Tibetan language books in the western hemisphere. The immense value of the PL 480 collection is beyond dispute, but it does have its limitations; for example, the collection comprises only those Tibetan language materials printed in India since 1964. Some of these reproductions, however, do include copies of early manuscripts that had been

fully conscious of the fact that the nature of the textual artifact, the form in which the *book* itself was codified and distributed, influences critically the outcome of our scholarly claims about the history of scriptural transmission in Tibet and the diffusion of specific religious ideas.

In the present context this matter is entirely relevant when we pause to consider that the fourteenth-century cycle of revealed scriptures attributed to the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa may not have been fully redacted and made widely available in printed form until the eighteenth century, when possibly for the first time woodblocks made from manuscript copies were prepared and a xylograph edition was produced. In one case in particular, the result was the production of a small set of Tibetan blocks which would later form the basis of most of the known xylograph redactions of the *Bar-do thos-grol* (and, likewise, of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*). In the centuries prior to the printing of the Kar-gling anthologies, the individual texts were circulated in manuscript form and scattered about in various temple libraries, reflecting the particular lineage affiliations and local customs of that community. By the eighteenth century, in the age of xylograph printing, it became easier and more economically feasible for the newly formed large monastic establishments to gather these local manuscripts and assemble them into printed volumes which would then represent the authoritative collection of a given textual lineage. This is in fact how the multiple editions of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* cycle came to be produced. The widespread diffusion of these texts could not have been possible before the first half of the eighteenth century when the technology of printing in Tibet reached a greater level of practicality and accessibility such that books could be produced (and stored) in sufficiently large quantities with a relatively constant supply of materials. Not only that, the costliness of book production, including the labor involved in papermaking, copying, carving, etc.,

preserved in the libraries of Tibet, as well as impressions made from woodblocks dating back to the eighteenth century. For a general discussion of the PL 480 program, see Schoening 1988.

required a scale of operations that only a large imperial or aristocratic-funded monastic complex could afford. Such monumental institutions did not exist in Tibet before the middle years of the fifteenth, and in many localities (primarily to the east) not even until the seventeenth century.

We should be clear that the transmission of religious knowledge, whether in the form of texts or direct oral instruction, was actually a rather fluid process in Tibet throughout much of its early history. Given the complexity of the interrelationships between families and clans, local alliances, religious orders, and so forth, contacts and exchanges between teachers and students were often quite open. In other words, despite a popular misconception, religious ideas and practices were frequently passed along lines moving in multiple directions, rather than strictly along a vertical axis defined by a particular sectarian affiliation. It is this dynamic that explains the diversity of the Kar-gling tradition, which from its inception, had gathered followers from both the Rnying-ma-pa and Bka'-brgyud-pa orders (especially, the Zur-mang, Zhwa-dmar-pa, and Dpa'-bo subsects). The connections particularly with the Karma Bka'-brgyud are not so surprising since historically (up until at least the seventeenth century) the regions surrounding Dwags-po and Kong-po were strongholds of that sect.[71]

Some of the fundamental texts of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* appear to have taken shape at two relatively obscure monasteries in southeastern Tibet—Rtse-le Gong-'og in Dwags-po and Thang-'brog 'Od-gsal-rtse in Kong-po. These institutions shared close alliances with leaders of the Zhwa-dmar-pa and Dba'-bo sects, and sheltered followers (lay and celibate) of both the Bka'-brgyud and Rnying-ma orders. We shall see that the written

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[71] Many of the Bka'-brgyud monasteries in that area were forcefully converted over to Dge-lugs-pa institutions in the seventeenth century, such as the monastery of Dwags-po Bshad-grub-gling which had previously been the seat of the Zhwa-dmar-pa. By the end of the seventeenth century it had become the main settlement of the Dge-lugs-pa monks of Dwags-po Grwa-tshang. See Nornang 1990; Dorje 1996, pp. 285-286.

texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in particular were perhaps initially formulated exclusively at these two monasteries. This bardo collection, in rough form, was likely derived from preexisting materials composed or compiled by Karma-gling-pa himself and later revised by his immediate successors—including most importantly his father Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, his son Nyi-zla-chos-rje, Guru Nyi-zla-'od-zer (Sūryacandraraśmi, b.1409/21), and the nebulous lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po. Both Mgon-po-rdo-rje and Nyi-zla-'od-zer were the first subsidiary links in the spread of the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmissions later received at Rtse-le and Thang-'brog (and also at Zur-mang monastery in eastern Tibet).

The abbot from Kong-po named Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho (b.1430) played the first active role in the institutionalization of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. He transformed the earlier nonclerical tradition by creating a coherent liturgical program that could be easily disseminated. This was all made possible by the status and security of his monastic position. In Tibet, it was primarily the monasteries that controlled the rites for the dead and thus the success of such liturgy depended upon ecclesiastical support, as well as the support of pious laity in the form of patronage. The significance of the monastic center in the propogation of the Kar-gling rituals cannot be overstated, although we must be careful to recognize the precise factors involved in that process. As knowledge of the *Zhi-khro* revelations, and especially those of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, spread throughout Tibet, they gradually became established as a primary source for the performance of the funeral rites. But, despite its eventual popularity and widespread distribution, this liturgy was never established as a dominant religious system identified exclusively with a single monastic tradition—as for example we find in the case of the monastery of Rdo-rje-brag and the "northern treasures" (*byang-gter*) of Rig-'dzin Rgod-ldem-can (1337-1409), or of the "southern treasures" (*lho-gter*) of Gter-bdag-gling-pa (1646-1714) tied to Smin-grol-gling monastery. The relative success or failure of any

given *gter-ma* tradition depended as much on the influence of external social and political forces as on the internal strength of its perceived religious efficacy. Although a few monasteries are known to have been established by early holders of Karma-gling-pa's transmissions,[72] these never seemed to have developed into politically powerful institutions. Without a strong political foundation, the Kar-gling textual tradition, dispersed as it was, could never support the organization of a proper sect in its own right. In later centuries, this *gter-ma* tradition would be reduced to a relatively anonymous and loosely bound collection of popular liturgical literature with no distinctive institutional identity.

Although at present we lack sufficient evidence to support the claim that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* rituals were certainly just one of several competing ritual forms in Tibet and surrounding regions, it has been indicated that the Kar-gling liturgy was not the only ritual program for death and dying available in Tibet. As is clear in Turrell Wylie's older study of Tibetan mortuary customs, for example, the early funeral practices of the Sa-skya-pa tradition prior to the eighteenth century involved mainly recitation of passages from the *Hevajra-* and *Vajrayogini-tantra-s* and not a single reading from the *Bar-do thos-grol*.[73] It would appear that in addition to these tantric prayers Tibetans from various periods turned also to the cycle of rituals associated with the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra* [*Tantra on the Elimination of All Evil Rebirths*], one of the earliest *tantra-s* translated in Tibet during the first propagation of Buddhism in that country.[74] As we shall see in Chapter 1, the prayers and ritual acts inscribed in this particular *tantra* emphasized the purification of sins, and provided a framework of ritual action regarded as necessary to eliminate obstacles that might hinder an auspicious destiny

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[72]Such as Rgya-ra-ba's Sman-mo Bkra-shis-dgon, Dpal Chos-'khor-rtse, and so forth. See Chapter 3.
[73]See Wylie 1964a, esp. p. 238 and 241.
[74]See Snellgrove 1987, pp. 453-454.

for the recently deceased. The Buddhist *tantra-s*, such as the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* and *Hevajra*, helped to shape a variety of ritual responses to death that developed in Tibet. Indeed, these ritual programs were preserved and must have continued to circulate alongside newer and perhaps more competitive models, such as those later presribed in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* literature.

Throughout their history, the various texts and rituals of the Kar-gling tradition were passed between separate lineages and maintained—alongside other similar systems (like those of Ratna-gling-pa, Padma-gling-pa, and 'Ja'-tshon-rnying-po)—at many different monasteries, often completely independent of one another. Each of these institutions possessed its own version of the *gter-ma* collection, comprised of texts from widely diverse periods and provenances. The individual works of these anthologies were produced in accordance with a particular lineage of transmission, and in them were preserved the local ritual customs of the associated religious community. To understand the history of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* tradition within and beyond the borders of Tibet, we must first have a clear knowledge of the lineages that preserved and actively promoted its liturgy. It is for this purpose, therefore, that I offer the present study.

3. SOURCES AND METHODS

To my knowledge, this is the first historical study of the formation and transmission of the *Zhi-khro* revelations of Karma-gling-pa, and particularly of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. At one level, it is a detailed narrative account of the transmission of a particular set of texts, of a distinctive collection of literature comprising specific rites and prayers for the dead and dying. At another level, it is an examination of the historical process that produced the variations in the manuscripts and blockprints of the Kar-gling textual tradition. Its sources are thus literary (biographies, monastic chronicles, and so forth) and

liturgical (lineage prayers, ritual catalogues, etc.). Because I have derived my research from sources which are for the most part historical and archival, my focus has been on the social and institutional histories of the texts and of their traditions rather than on questions of their religious meaning. Since the history of this literature on the whole has rarely been addressed in contemporary scholarship, it is my hope that by expanding the focus of investigation, this study may highlight important information that has gone previously unnoticed. Finally, in the interests of those specialists pursuing topics in Tibetan historiography and religious history, I hope that I have been somewhat successful in demonstrating the special qualities of certain types of primary sources—too long neglected—for constructing history, and especially bibliographical history and textual transmission in Tibet. Toward this aim, a few specific words are in order on the methods and materials used in writing this particular history.

The present study is based first of all on a reading of Rgya-ra-ba's *Brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus nor-bu'i phreng-ba* [*Garland of Jewels: An Abridged History of the Transmission Lineage*].[75] This work, composed in 1499, provides what appears to be the earliest account of the Kar-gling transmissions. It is, therefore, of great historical significance. Save for a few brief references in the work of Dieter Back, the text has remained relatively unknown. I have consulted it primarily for information on the lives of Karma-gling-pa and his immediate successors, including most importantly Rgya-ra-ba himself. To begin to construct a coherent picture of the tradition's development, I compared the details of Rgya-ra-ba's text with the relevant accounts found in various other *chos-'byung*, or "religious histories", as well as important *gter-'byung*, "treasure histories".[76] I found that some of the materials offered conflicting information, and so I

[75]LGNB. A transcription and translation of this work is included in Appendix 1.

[76]On the meaning of these categories, see particularly Vostrikov 1970, pp. 139-145; Gyatso 1993, pp. 110-126; Kuijp 1996, pp. 46-47; Martin 1997, p. 13. For specific details of sources consulted, see Chapter 3.

had to make decisions of probability based on a close examination of all the evidence gathered before me. My first step was to order the sources chronologically so that I could analyze changes over time and prevent myself as much as possible from making anachronistic conclusions. This allowed me to see more clearly points of agreement and divergence in the various narratives, and to better determine what material might have been added by later generations. From this data, I was able to piece together a basic story. This is the main topic of Chapter 3. I realized, however, that the full history of this tradition required much more rigorous comparative analysis, so I then concentrated my efforts on additional biographical evidence from alternative sources.

It has often been remarked that Tibetans have tended toward a certain preoccupation with history.[77] Such emphasis appears for the most part to be based on concerns for legitimizing claims to authenticity. One way in which this was accomplished was through appeal to lines of authority leading backwards unbroken in time. Records of lineal succession (*brgyud-rim*) and prayers to past masters (*brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*) abound in Tibetan religious literature. The anthologies of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* include several texts of this genre. In the most basic terms, these works are comprised of lists upon lists of names, usually arranged in chronological order, that belong to a particular doctrinal or ritual lineage. These short texts are significant in that they often provide the names of identifiable personalities. For my study, I was intent on gathering this type of information in order first to establish the number of separate transmission lineages that existed throughout the history of the Kar-gling literature; and secondly, to trace relationships between individual members of those lineages.

With this task in mind, I also turned my attention to another type of archival document known as *gsan-yig*, "records of (teachings) received"—or, as the case may be,

[77]See, for example, the comment of Michael Aris in Martin 1997, p. 9; cf. also Kuijp 1996, p. 40.

of "(teachings) obtained" (*thob-yig*), properly understood as registries of a particular individual's religious and scholastic education. Typically autobiographical, these records contain meticulous lists of the titles of written texts, verbal instructions, and ritual initiations received throughout the author's life, and include the names of the teachers from whom such materials were obtained. Many of the more extensive *gsan-yig*—much like *brgyud-rim*—record the complete history of the transmission series for each received item. These texts are thus extremely valuable for the light they shed on Tibetan intellectual and bibliographical history. But, regrettably, few scholars have paid close attention to them.[78] It is my hope that specialists in Tibetan studies will soon begin to recognize the potential value of such records. For my own research, I have relied on several works of this genre, most notably the voluminous seventeenth-century records of the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) and Gter-bdag-gling-pa.[79] From these documents, and from the aforementioned *brgyud-rim*, I was able to establish a wide range of lineages of the *Zhi-khro* transmission in Tibet, and also, importantly, to begin to uncover the institutional affiliations of the individuals in those lineages (see Appendix 2).

One of my methods of using the *gsan-yig*, *thob-yig*, and *brgyud-rim* documents was to read them side by side with the relevant abbatial records (*gdan-rabs*) of the specific monasteries that I had identified as possible centers for the practice of the Kar-gling rituals.[80] In reading through these ecclesiastic histories, I first looked for proper names that were familiar from the lists of lineages. I then read the appropriate sections carefully and took extensive notes, paying close attention to the fine points of the person's life and

[78]To my knowledge, there is only a handful of scholars who have recognized the utility of these texts, see particularly Tucci 1949, pp. 95 and 124-125; Vostrikov 1970, pp. 199-202; Ehrhard 1993; Kuijp 1995; Martin 1997, p. 16; Gyatso 1998, p. 104.
[79]DLSY and TSLY, respectively.
[80]On *gdan-rabs*, see Smith 1969d, pp. 12-15; Vostrikov 1970, pp. 88-92; Martin 1997, p. 14. Many of the abbatial successions that I consulted were actually included as chapters in the monumental nineteenth-century *chos-'byung* of Guru Bkra-shis Ngag-dbang-blo-gros (GKCB). I cannot recommend this masterful work enough. It is certainly unfortunate that few western scholars have recognized the great value and significance of this history. An outline of its contents is provided in Martin 1991b.

religious training. I discovered that much of these passages contained information similar to that found in the archival records, such as the names of teachers and of texts received. However, the added value of the monastic records was that they provided dates of people and events. They also described the founding of the monastery and details about both its internal affairs and external contacts. This proved incredibly valuable for determining the nature of the relations between various institutions and for elucidating some of the social and political contexts in which the textual traditions developed. To this material I then added information taken from the hagiographies (*rnam-thar*) and autobiographies (*rang-rnam*)[81] of a few prominent monastic leaders, notably Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1608-1680),[82] Gter-bdag-gling-pa,[83] and Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa.[84] In Chapters 4 and 5, I discuss at great length the biographical details of the various transmission lineages and the institutions with which they were associated.

The materials that I used for the study of the Kar-gling texts themselves included the previously mentioned *gsan-yig* and *thob-yig*, as well as various catalogues (*dkar-chag*)[85] and printing indexes (*par-tho*)[86]—in both Tibetan and western-languages—and the colophons (*mjug-byang*) of selected works.[87] My aim was to identify, organize, and compare the multiple editions, in all extant forms, so that I might better understand some aspects of the historical content and physical history of these books. The analytical evidence that I derived from this intensive investigation, corroborated with western

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[81]On autobiography in Tibet, see the recent work of Janet Gyatso; cf. Gyatso 1997b and 1998.
[82]TSNG.
[83]TLNT.
[84]GKCB, pp. 820-860.
[85]On *dkar-chag*, see Smith 1970c; Martin 1996a.
[86]See Chandra 1981, *passim*.
[87]Tibetans distinguish a number of different types of colophon. I have seen examples of at least the following: *bsgyur-byang* (translator's colophon), *par-byang* (printer's colophon), *'bri(s)-byang* (calligrapher's colophon), and *mdzad-byang* (compositor's colophon). Scholars have, for some time now, relied on colophons as sources for historical evidence because they frequently contain valuable information about dates, authors, editors, publishers, and so forth.

bibliographical records and other secondary evidence, revealed a complex history of local variation, annotation, emendation, and the like. The results of my preliminary findings in this area form the basis of my discussions in Chapter 2 and at the conclusion of Chapter 5 (see also the references compiled in Appendices 3 and 4).

I undertook this project with the intention of contributing to the study of the origin and circulation of the body of Tibetan literature which has formed the basis of the celebrated *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Recognizing that western scholarship has been too apt to view this *book* as an abstraction outside of real time and space, I set out to investigate the manner in which the Tibetan texts have been articulated and transmitted within their own complex religious and social arenas. As a carefully contextualized study of history and religion, this project is an exploration not only of certain religious ideas and practices embedded in historicized texts, but also of the religious texts themselves, and of the interaction between text and context. It is my hope that the detailed focus of this research may provide a clear vantage point from which to survey general aspects of the transmission of religious ideas, the production and distribution of religious texts, and the influence of institutions on religious practice within Tibet and surrounding cultures.

The reader may note that the details of the contents of the ideas and rituals of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* are not so central in my presentation as they could be, or perhaps should be. This is because I saw that the history of the transmission of the texts themselves was in my opinion the most pressing scholarly task. Some may object that I have not tackled so rigorously questions of the sociopolitical contexts of the *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* rituals in Tibet. Again I felt that the origin, structure, and circulation of the texts required a more thorough examination before such questions could be adequately addressed. The social and political history of this literature is a subject that I hope now to begin to pursue. In addition, the reader should also be aware that my study ends in the

middle of the eighteenth century. By that time, although the Kar-gling tradition in general continued to develop in localized settings, the basic structural and practical components of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in particular appear to have been in place within what might be characterized as the mainstream of xylograph production. The blockprinting of these texts almost certainly assured the widespread transmission of the tradition, in a somewhat standardized form, to later generations within and beyond the borders of Tibet.

In concluding, I wish to offer a brief statement about how this study has been organized. In Chapter 1, I attempt to establish the broader conceptual premises and ritual responses upon which Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* revelations were grounded. Here, I survey the basic concepts of death and afterlife during Tibet's imperial age; pursue the intellectual history of the Indo-Buddhist doctrine of the intermediate-state (*antarābhava*) and its development in Tibet; examine the conceptual innovations of the Rdzogs-chen, or "Great Perfection", tradition; and analyze the details of the basic ritual sequence for death and dying prescribed in the funeral texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. My focus in Chapter 2 is on the individual texts that constitute the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* anthology. In this section, I introduce the basic structure of the literary cycle and organize its contents into seven thematic categories. In Chapter 3, I explore the mythic origins of the Kar-gling discoveries, examine the biographies of Karma-gling-pa and his immediate successors, and conclude with a few remarks about the institutionalization of the *Zhi-khro* liturgy. I then explore the transmission of this liturgy and the details of each of its major lineages in Chapter 4. At the end of that section, I investigate the unique history of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and attempt to demonstrate the singular importance of the monasteries of Dwags-po Rtse-le, Kong-po Thang-'brog, and Lho-brag Lha-lung in the formative years of its transmission. In Chapter 5, I focus on the later stages in the history of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. Here, I examine the life and legacy of the controversial *gter-ston* Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-

grags-pa, who appears to have been the first to standardize the *Bar-do thos-grol's* arrangement. It was his redaction that served as the model for most subsequent Tibetan-language editions, and became the prime basis for the first western-language translation of the *Bar-do thos-grol* by Kazi Dawa Samdup and Walter Evans-Wentz.

I have attached several rather long appendices to this study, containing the archival information upon which the bulk of my research has been based. It is my hope that this extensive data will be of some interest to future scholars.

1.

Death and the Dead in Tibet

Tibetan Buddhism has for centuries maintained that crucial moments of transition are charged with great spiritual potential, particulary the intervening moments between death and rebirth. The Tibetan expression for this postmortem interval is *bardo* (short for *srid-pa'i bar-ma-do* and equivalent to the Sanskrit *antarābhava*). This concept is by now quite familiar to western readers. In Tibetan the term has come to refer to any state of suspended reality in which a being-in-transition confronts the nature of reality-as-such (*chos-nyid*). In the specific case of passage after death, it is proclaimed that the dead are presented with a series of opportunities for recognizing the actual "truth" (*de-bzhin-nyid*) of that moment. Accordingly, in some circles it is held that if the deceased at certain times is capable of perceiving correctly the confusing and often terrifying bardo visions as simply mental projections reflective of the previous life's thoughts and deeds, then it is said that buddhahood will be attained. Failure to recognize these visions, however, leads eventually to rebirth and further suffering in the cycle of existence (*saṃsāra*). Traditionally, to help the deceased travelers (re)gain insight into their ambiguous situation, a monk or skilled layperson will recite guiding instructions and inspirational prayers from special funeral texts—the so-called "Books of the Dead".

This rather general and uncomplicated description of the bardo concept is reflective of a popular understanding of the Tibetan term. But, despite the simplicity of this basic presentation, the theory of postmortem transition and its development in Tibet is, on the contrary, quite a complex and convoluted matter, and one which has not been well-documented or seriously examined. In this chapter we will explore the changing

perceptions of death and afterlife among the Tibetans before and after the arrival of Buddhism and attempt to chart the course of development of the bardo concept from its origins in India, its introduction to Tibet, and the various subsequent phases of its reformulation leading up to the fourteenth-century *Zhi-khro* revelations of Karma-gling-pa and the discovery of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*.

1. THE BIRTH OF FUNERAL RITUAL IN IMPERIAL TIBET

Before the official arrival of Buddhism from India sometime in the late seventh century, court-sanctioned Tibetan religious practice was focused largely on the person of the king (*khri*). Since it was held that the welfare of the kingdom depended upon the welfare of its ruler, special rituals were performed to protect and prolong the king's life, and when dead, to guarantee his safe passage to the heavens above. According to some of the early historical records discovered at Tun-huang (dating roughly between the years 650 and 1000),[1] the priests that performed such rituals were identified by the name *bon-po* and their beliefs by the term *bon*.[2] Although it is commonly claimed that this ancient pre-Buddhist class of Tibetan priests became the *Bon-po* religion of modern times,[3] historical evidence indicates that Bon developed into an organized and distinctive religious tradition only in deliberate opposition to Buddhism (*Chos*) no earlier than the tenth century. More than likely, a genuine pre-Buddhist Bon religion never truly existed. In other words, the developments of Buddhism and Bon were separate but simultaneous

[1]Tun-huang was a settlement on the trade routes through Central Asia controlled by the Tibetans in the seventh and eight centuries. Samuel 1993, p. 442. Much of what scholars know of the ancient Tibetan kingdom has depended to a great extent on the manuscripts recovered from this site and preserved in both the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Pelliot Collection) and the British Library, London (Stein Collection). Materials for the study of these important texts can be found in Lalou 1939-1961; Bacot et. al. 1940; Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979.

[2]See particularly Pelliot Tibetain (PT) 972 and 1038. Karmay 1998, p. 290; cf. also Macdonald 1971, p. 218.

[3]Snellgrove has insisted that "the activities of *bon* and *gshen* as functionaries of early Tibetan religion is one thing; a constituted Bon religion is another". Snellgrove 1987, p. 403n.47.

processes in the later religious history of Tibet.[4] Over the centuries the mixture of indigenous Tibetan beliefs and practices with those of Buddhism and Bon has succeeded in almost completely obscuring any distinctions between them. What appears to be certain is that ancient Tibetan religion revolved essentially around ideas about the creative and destructive powers of nature—particularly those of the earth—and the constitution and persistence of the "soul" (*bla*). Certain elements of these ideas have survived and can be discerned in Bon-po and also, as the case may be, in Buddhist literature but such ideas themselves are fundamentally different from the basic doctrines of the Bon religion that we know had been instituted originally only after the arrival of Buddhism to Tibet. Scholars have suspected that some of the literature and liturgy of the Bon-pos, and also particularly of the Buddhist Rnying-ma-pas, contain deep within their layers a constellation of Tibetan ideas on death and the hereafter that have more or less survived from ancient times.[5]

Evidence contained in the Tun-huang manuscripts suggests that a highly sophisticated funerary tradition with no connection whatsoever to Buddhism was in place and active very early on in Tibet. However, we still know precious little about the ancient Tibetan concepts of life and death, living and dead, despite the availability of a

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[4]The distinction between Chos (Buddhism) and Bon has been a topic of some controversy among scholars. The explanation that has become the accepted opinion in academic circles was first formulated by David Snellgrove. He has recently summarized his viewpoint: "We may deduce from their later separation into the general categories of rNying-ma and Bon that they differed in their manner of acceptance of all these teachings and practices. The later rNying-ma-pas were those who tried to hold firm to some of the more scholarly traditions established in the eighth and early ninth centuries. They accepted the Indian Buddhist tradition as primary while not denying their Central Asian connections. So they came to establish themselves as genuine Tibetan Buddhists, adapting the new religion to the needs of their own country. The Bon-pos, on the other hand, were those who refused to accept the Indian tradition as primary, persisting in the view that their religion already existed in Tibet before Indian teachers arrived there under royal command in the 8th century. They had never made a clear distinction between indigenous Tibetan religion and what they had earlier learned about Buddhism, of which they had certainly learned a great deal more since the time of Khri Srong-lde-brstan. Thus they included various grades of indigenous religious practice in the arrangement of their teachings into their Nine Ways." (Snellgrove 1987, pp. 404-405). An opposite opinion is supported in Karmay 1998, pp. 157-168; cf. also the response to Karmay's argument in Stein 1988b.

[5]On Bon-po materials from Tun-huang, see especially Lalou 1949 and 1952; Stein 1970.

considerable amount of early and potentially fruitful material. Regrettably, few Tibetologists have ventured to reach beyond the earlier studies of Marcelle Lalou, Erik Haarh, and Rolf A. Stein "to explore, even superficially, this blank spot on the map of ancient Tibetan culture and history".[6] The paucity of research on the subject indicates perhaps some lack of interest or motivation on the part of scholars to take up Haarh's call to future researchers: "The fact that the autochthonous, Tibetan religious history has until recently remained a virgin soil, that considerable material for its exploration is available and has been for more than a century, ought to be an inspiration and instigation to further studies in this field".[7] Sadly, Haarh's statement published thirty years ago still stands even today as an accurate portrayal of our current and fledgling state of research.

> "We are here setting foot on virgin soil, when attempting to explore the concept of existence, or life and death among the Tibetans of pre-Bonpo time. We are obliged to draw our conclusions from the reminiscences of it sparsely surviving in Buddhist sources, and from the fact that it constitutes the substratum on and from which later, better known concepts have grown and developed."[8]

In the section that follows we will review some of the relevant materials dealing with ancient Tibetan funeral custom and attempt to draw out the basic concepts of death and the afterlife prevalent during the royal period (seventh through ninth century). In the end we hope to argue for the continuity of these ideas in the Buddhist and Bon-po traditions and to trace their influence on the "later, better known concepts" such as the Buddhist notion of a prolonged postmortem intermediate period (Skt., *antarābhava*, Tib., *bar-do*).

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[6]Haarh 1969, p. 327.

[7]Haarh 1969, p. 14. In this light, Todd Gibson's insightful comment certainly bears repeating, that Haarh's *Yar-luṅ Dynasty* "seems to have been little read, though it is frequently cited in bibliographies". See Gibson 1991, p. 30.

[8]Haarh 1969, p. 314.

We have noted that in Tibet prior to the influx of Buddhist influences there already existed a broad range of accepted beliefs and approaches to the problems generated by death and the dead. Perhaps the most detailed, well-documented, and persuasive reconstruction of the early history of such ideas remains Erik Haarh's *The Yar-luṅ Dynasty*, a study inspired in part by the earlier speculations of Giuseppe Tucci.[9] This vast and impressive work purports to be a study of ancient Tibetan history derived to a large extent from a variety of myths and legends from the Tun-huang cache. In this book Haarh organizes his wealth of primary source material around three established Tibetan (Buddhist) traditions concerning the origin and nature of the first Tibetan king, Gnya'-khri-btsan-po (Nyag-khri-btsan-po, also 'O-lde-spu-rgyal).[10] In chronological sequence, the three mythic traditions are referred to as: (1) *Yang-gsang The'u-rang-lugs* [Ultra Secret Tradition of the The'u-rang], (2) *Grags-pa Bon-lugs* [Renowned Tradition of Bon], and (3) *Gsang-ba Chos-lugs* [Secret Tradition of Chos (Buddhism)].[11] The first tradition describes the progenitor king as a descendant of a *the'u-rang* spirit from the land of the dead,[12] while the Bon tradition maintains his descent from the celestial (*gnam*) *lha* deities with close connections to the *bstan* forces of the earth (*sa*) and the aquatic *klu* and ancestral *mtshun* spirits of the underworld (*sa-'og*).[13] The Buddhist or Chos tradition proclaims an Indo-Buddhist identity and describes the progenitor as an exiled Indian prince. As Gibson has noted, this third tradition is almost certainly a "transparent attempt

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[9]Haarh 1969, p. 14; cf. especially Tucci 1949 and 1950.

[10]Karmay has argued that the terms of at least two of these traditions, the *Grags-pa Bon-lugs* and *Gsang-ba Chos-lugs* "were Buddhist creations which do not have any intrinsic meaning as far as these historical traditions are concerned". Karmay 1998, p. 294.

[11]Haarh 1969, p. 17, *passim*; cf. also Karmay 1998, pp. 240-244

[12]Haarh 1969, pp. 413-414; Gibson 1991, pp. 110-111.

[13]Karmay notes similarities between the Bon-po version of the origin of the first king and that found in certain Tun-huang manuscripts, namely PT 1038 and 1236. From this he argues that the *Grags-pa bon-lugs* is "not entirely a fabrication dating from after the tenth century". See Karmay 1998, p. 259; cf. also Tucci 1949, p. 733; Haarh 1969, pp. 212-217; Gibson 1991, p. 107.

at legitimation by connection with the sacred land of Buddhism".[14] This is not the place to provide an overview of Haarh's elaborate discussion of these three traditions. It will suffice to evaluate certain pertinent conceptual features of the origin myths presented—especially those of the Grags-pa Bon—for these traditions provide significant clues as to how death might have been conceived and dealt with during this early period.

Haarh argues extensively that each of the origin myths reflect important political transitions and religious transformations.[15] The first and most radical shift is preserved in the myth of the eighth king of the Tibetan dynasty, Gri-gum-btsan-po and his son and successor Bya-khri (or Sha-khyi), otherwise known as Spu-de-gung-rgyal.[16] Versions of the myth are extant in a number of variant sources,[17] the earliest of which is found as a section of the Tun-huang manuscript Pelliot Tibetain (PT) 1287.[18] It is the later Buddhist account, however, from the fourteenth-century *Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long* [*Mirror Illuminating the Royal Genealogies*] that has prevailed as the version most commonly endorsed.[19] In that account, Gri-gum-btsan-po challenges his minister Long-ngam-rta-rdzi[20] to a battle in which the king's "*dmu*-cord" (*dmu-thag*) is severed and he himself is killed.[21] According to the cosmology of the early Grags-pa Bon tradition, Tibetan kings prior to Gri-gum were said to have descended from heaven by this special rope. At death, they returned to heaven by the same means and left no physical remains. With the death of

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[14]Gibson 1991, p. 107.
[15]Haarh 1969, pp. 17-18, 168-230.
[16]This also appears to be the prevailing view among scholars after Haarh. See, for example, Kirkland 1982; Gibson 1991, pp. 113-116; Samuel 1993, p. 441; Smith 1996, pp. 39-41.
[17]For a relatively complete list, see Sorensen 1994, p. 141n.372.
[18]Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979, pp. 21-31; Translations of this version can be found in Bacot 1940-1946, pp. 123-124; Haarh 1969, pp. 402-403; Gibson 1991, pp. 118-123.
[19]The myth is found in GLRB, pp. 55-57. Translation in Sorensen 1994, pp. 141-144; Sakyapa Sonam Gyaltsen 1996, pp. 82-83.
[20]Macdonald has argued that Long-ngam was historically the name of a prince of Myang-ro. See Macdonald 1971, p. 197; cf. also Richardson 1998, p. 125.
[21]Stein writes: "...the name applied to this rope, *dmu*, was also used both for the sky, i.e., heaven, and for the king's maternal family (whose home it was). Stein 1972, p. 48; cf. also Norbu 1995, pp. 75-76; Karmay 1998, p. 252.

Gri-gum-btsan-po, however, this crucial link connecting the ruler to heaven was broken and a corpse now remained on earth. This required the establishment (or importation) of a ritual custom for dealing with corpses, and thus Gri-gum and the following kings were memorialized according to a newly prescribed funeral rite and subsequently buried in monumental tombs. According to the myth's narrative, just after Gri-gum's death his three sons, Sha-khri, Nya-khri, and Bya-khri flee to the three districts of Kong-po, Nyang-po, and Spo-bo, respectively. In a dream Gri-gum's queen has a vision of the mountain-god Yar-lha-sham-po (of Nyang) and later gives birth to a miraculous son, 'Dzang-gi-bu Ru-la-skyes. It is this son who avenges his father's death by first murdering Long-ngam-rta-rdzi and then recovering Gri-gum's corpse, which had been deposed in the river Nyang-chu-skya-mo. Ru-la-skyes is said also to have built a tomb for the king at Dar-thang in 'Phying-yul[22] and brought the prince Bya-khri back from Spo-bo. Bya-khri was later enthroned as the ninth Tibetan emperor Spu-de-gung-rgyal.

The earlier Tun-huang version of the myth gives a different account of Gri-gum-btsan-po's death at the hands of Long-ngam-rta-rdzi. Here, the battle between Gri-gum and Long-ngam ends with the king being led into the sky by a deity called Lde-bla-gung-rgyal—a name which appears to represent the ruler's "soul" (*bla*)[23] or more specifically his "embodied soul" (*sku-bla*).[24] By some obscure means Long-ngam causes Lde-bla-gung-rgyal to be cast into the "womb" (*rum*) of the Ti-se glacier (Mount Kailash) where,

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[22]Located in the south-central district of 'Phyong-rgyas, 'Phying-yul or simply 'Phying-ba was the ancient seat of the Yar-lung kings and the principal center of imperial power prior to the establishment of Lhasa.

[23]Samten Karmay has defined the *bla* as "a support upon which the physiological and intellectual aspects of life rest. It is thus considered the most important of the three physiological principles, which also include 'respiratory breath' (*dbugs*) and 'vital force' (*srog*). 'Vital force' is as essential as the *bla*, but 'respiratory breath' is perishable and therefore temporary in comparison with the *bla*. As life principle the *bla* pervades all parts of the body, but it depends upon 'respiratory breath' and cannot function without it. The *bla* is also regarded as one of the three intellectual principles together with 'thought' (*yid*) and 'mind' (*sems*)." Karmay 1998, p. 311.

[24]Gibson 1991, p. 122n.42 (cf. also Haarh 1969, p. 343): "The deity lDe-bla-guṅ-rgyal undoubtedly belongs to an ancient stratum, and his function is somehow connected with the idea of bla, the life-power". On the meaning of *sku-bla* in this context, see Gibson 1991, pp. 77-82; also Karmay 1998, pp. 441-447.

as a result, both Lde-bla-gung-rgyal and Gri-gum finally die.[25] As in the Buddhist version, Gri-gum's corpse is recovered by a son of unusual pedigree, in this case named Spus-kyi-bu Ngar-las-skyes. This boy finds that the king's body has been deposited in the stomach of a serpent deity (*klu*)—akin to the *nāga* in Indian mythology—and together the two strike a deal. In return for the corpse, Ngar-las-skyes must give the *klu* a human ransom with very specific features (e.g., her eyes must open from below like those of a bird). The boy finds an appropriate substitute in the person of young girl. As recompense, the girl's mother asks that in the future certain burial rituals be performed for the corpses of dead kings.[26] After pledging to fulfill this request, Ngar-las-skyes takes the daughter and leaves her in the stomach of the serpent as a ransom for the release of Gri-gum's corpse, which is later ritually buried by the king's two sons, Nya-khyi and Sha-khyi (Bya-khri in the Buddhist account). The former became ruler of Kong-po while the latter settled in 'Phying-ba and became known as Spu-de-gung-rgyal, the ninth Tibetan king. Haarh argues that this particular version of the story functions as a unique and unprecedented etiological explanation of "the origin of the particular rites which were performed by the preparation of the corpse".[27] Likewise, as Gibson observed, the myth also seems to provide justification for the ritual offering of ransoms (*glud*) in the form of

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[25]Richardson suggests that this site was probably not as far west as Kailash, but rather closer to Kong-po in the Nyang-chu valley. See Richardson 1998, p. 125. It is interesting to note certain similiarities in the early Tibetan notion of Mount Ti-se and that of the Chinese Mount T'ai-shan. In the cosmology of pre-Buddhist China, the upwardly mobile "soul", called *hun*, returned at death to Mount T'ai. The capital of Mount T'ai, Liang-fu, was the traditional site where imperial sacrifices were performed to the supreme deity of the earth named Ti chu, the Lord of Earth. By some obscure circumstance, Ti chu became known as Ti-hsia chu, the Lord of the Underworld, and later transformed into the familiar T'ai-shan fu-chün, the Lord of Mount T'ai. With its close connections to the rite of sacrifice, which involved the establishment of an effective link between the living and the dead, Mount T'ai was guaranteed a central position in later Chinese conceptions of the afterlife. See Yü 1987, pp. 389-390. Teiser notes that Ta'i-shan "was recognized as the seat of the administration of the dead even before the Han dynasty", and was later conflated with the Buddhist concept of hell (*naraka*). Teiser 1994, p. 176.

[26]See note 36 below.

[27]Haarh 1969, p. 344.

sacrifice.[28] In this regard, it is noteworthy that the *glud* ritual, in its benign form, continues to play an active and fundamental role in Tibetan liturgy.[29]

The myth of Gri-gum's death, in all of its variants, points very clearly to changes in religious and cultural traditions. As Tucci noted, Gri-gum-btsan-po "personifies the memory of a transition of great significance in the history of Tibetan culture".[30] Following Tucci, Haarh argues that the myth is symbolic of a transition not only between two very different concepts of ruler but also between an older cosmology and that of an entirely new religious worldview, or more specifically between two distinct conceptions of the living and the dead:

> "....G. Tucci describes Gri-gum-bstan-po as 'a symbol of a fracture in the current of ideas,' and in a wider sense we may imply that the time symbolized by the two kings [Gri-gum and his son Spu-de-gung-rgyal] indicates a crisis, political and religious, and a transition between two ages of culture symbolized by father and son. We have seen, moreover, that the essential difference between these two ages is to be found in the change of religious ideology or, more concretely, in the fundamentally different concepts of Man's position towards the world of the defunct. Having previously been haunted by fear of the dead, defenseless towards the powers of the earth, Man now received means to master and subdue the chthonic powers. We have postulated that this change of the concept of the mutual relation between Living and Dead presented the spiritual background for the rise of the Dynasty..."[31]

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[28] Gibson 1991, p. 124.

[29] On the history of the concept of *glud* and its attendant rituals, see Karmay 1998, pp. 339-379; cf. also Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, *passim*, esp. pp. 359-361 and 507-511; Ramble 1982; Mumford 1989, pp. 149-157; Norbu 1995, pp. 77-86.

[30] Tucci 1988, p. 246.

[31] Haarh 1969, p. 309.

This crucial shift in religious paradigms was fundamentally a change in funeral custom; a change personified in the form of Gri-gum's son and successor Bya-khri/Sha-khyi or Spu-de-gung-rgyal. What distinguished the two paradigms was the presence in the latter of a new sense of the meaning of death and of the place of the dead vis-à-vis the living. In this way, the myth is viewed as a symbolic narrative of the introduction of a new and perhaps foreign constellation of concepts concerning the recently and distantly deceased. These concepts expressed a particular understanding of the dead and of the ritual treatment of corpses. Here,

> "the idea of a second world of existence prevailed, a world of the Dead which in its entity was antagonistic towards that of the Living, the fundamental difference between the Living and the Dead Being was contingent upon the presence or absence of bLa, life-power. Death meant no end, but the transition of Man to a new form of existence in which he, the Dead, conscious of his loss of life-power, became inimical towards the Living, and noxious or mischievous, gdug pa can, to him in his desire to recover his own life-power or destroy that of the Living. To the Tibetans these ideas were the cause of a constant fear of the dead relatives, the ancestors, or the realm of the dead as a whole, from which the ancestral cult or the cult of the dead of their imagined manifestations took its origin."[32]

Such notions were introduced into Tibet—or more precisely, into the Yar-lung valley—via the introduction of a new and somewhat obscure ritual tradition (perhaps hailing originally from the vicinity of Kong-po),[33] which would later be identified retroactively

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[32]Haarh 1969, p. 314.

[33]Alternatively, as we noted in the Introduction, the Gri-gum legend has been viewed by Haarh as a myth preserving a collective memory of a monumental conflict between indigenous Tibetan clans already settled in Yar-lung (the so-called "Bird Dynasty", *Bya-khri*) and foreign groups or tribes following

with the Bon-po funeral cult known as *'Dur Bon* or "Cemetery Bon".[34] Since it was believed that the dead (*mtshun*, ancestral spirits) continued to manifest a hostile power over the living, the primary and predominant function of this new cult was therefore to contain the aggressive menace of the dead by closing them off in tombs. A type of ritual expert or "funeral priest" (*dur-gshen*)[35] served this purpose by a special ritual treatment of the corpse, and by a variety of mortuary rites in general.[36] This same belief in the effective relationship between the living and the dead has endured throughout Tibet's religious history and is still prevalent in the Buddhist funeral rites associated with the *Bar-do thos-grol*, for example, where we find explicit the idea that surviving relatives can positively effect the condition of the dead by performing various rituals aimed at purifying the sins of their ancestor.

Since it was also accepted in this ancient period that in life the soul (*bla*) was capable of wandering away from the body (*'khyams-pa*), or worse yet that it might be seduced and taken away by demons or other evil manifestations of the dead,[37] a further object of these ritual specialists was to shepherd the soul (*bla-'gugs*) or recapture it by means of a

strikingly different customs in Kong-po (*Nya-khri*), with the eventual outcome of the latter's defeat of the former. Haarh 1969, p. 18.

[34]GLRB, pp. 57-58; Sorensen 1994, p. 144-147; Sakyapa Sonam Gyaltsen 1996, pp. 85-86. On the nine divisions of the Bon-po tradition, see especially Snellgrove 1967a, *passim*, esp. pp. 9-11; Karmay 1972, pp. 18 and 31; Norbu 1995, pp. 35-50.

[35]On the Bon-po funeral priests according to the Bon scripture *Gzi-brjid rab-tu 'bar-ba'i mdo*, here called "priests of existence" (*srid-gshen*), see Snellgrove 1967a, pp. 116-123; Norbu 1995, pp. 87-102.

[36]A possible description of these rites may be found in several Tun-huang manuscripts, e.g., PT 1042, PT 239ii. See Lalou 1949 and 1952; Stein 1970—also in the passage referred to above, examined by Haarh 1969, p. 344. In this latter piece the mother of the ransomed girl makes the following request to Ngar-le-skyes: "I want nothing but this: that in all future when a *bTsan-po*, who has withdrawn as a ruler, dies, the top-knot of the hair should be bound like a braid (*'phreṅ-mo*), the surface (of the body) should be annointed with vermilion (*mtshal*), the body should be lacerated and scratched, incision should be made into the corpse of *bTsan-po*, and it should be taken away from men that it may decay. Food should be eatern and drunk. Will you do like that, or will you not do like that?"
The Tibetan reads: *de blu na ji 'dod ces ma la dris na / ma na re gzhan myi 'dod / nam nam zha zhar / btsan po rje dbyal zhig nongs na / thor to 'phreng mo ni bcings / ngo la mtshal gyis byugs / lus la ni bzhags / btsan po'i spur la ni 'tshog / myi la 'phrog phom / zas la ni za 'thun / de ltar bya 'am myi bya zhas mchi nas*. Haarh 1969, p. 405. The removal of the corpse from society so that it may decompose in isolation prior to the final rites is common in societies that employ the practice of "double burial". For the classic anthropological interpretation of such customs, see Hertz 1960, pp. 27-86. For an example of how this model might be applied in the context of Tibetan Buddhist ritual, see Ramble 1982.

[37]Karmay 1998, p. 315.

ransom (*bla-glud*), to summon its return (*bla-'bod*), and to guarantee its safe passage (*lam-bstan*). This rather ancient Tibetan belief in the vulnerability of the soul seems to have instilled a profound and long-standing sense of fear and anxiety in the face of crises brought on by illness and death.[38] Evidence for this has survived in the later Buddhist and Bon-po ritual literature that describes techniques for "ransoming the soul" (*bla-bslu*), "calling the life" (*tshe-'gugs*),[39] and for safely guiding (*'dren-pa*) the deceased through the perilous pathways of the bardo (*bar-do 'phrang*). In this light, we can certainly agree with Samten Karmay who has made claims for a real continuity between the ritual beliefs of ancient Tibet and those preserved by the later ritual tradition.[40] As we shall see, for instance, the notion of the *bla* and its attendant rituals rather than dissolving into the collective memory of an archaic past seems instead to have been adopted into and only superficially masked by certain Indo-Buddhist concepts, most explicitly the theory of a postmortem intermediate period (*antarābhava*, *bar-do*) and of a consciousness (*vijñāna*, *rnam-par shes-pa*) that sheds the physical body at death and wanders (*'khyams-pa*) in search of its next birth.[41]

It is clear that the conflation of both indigenous and imported concepts contributed to the formation in Tibet of an entirely unique liturgical program which can be appropriately termed "bardo ritual" (*bar-do cho-ga*).[42] This specific practice, however, does not appear

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[38]See, for instance, the case studies discussed in Mumford 1989.

[39]See Lessing 1951; Karmay 1998, pp. 310-338.

[40]Karmay 1998, p. 337. Karmay makes this point in the context of arguing for the antiquity of certain Bon-po practices, but I tend to think that the same argument can be put forward with respect to particular Buddhist rites as well without taking away from Karmay's original hypothesis.

[41]The process by which *vijñāna* becomes associated with consciousness at death appears to originate with Vasubandhu and his attempts to explain the principle of interdepedent origination (*pratityasamutpāda*). See Kritzer 1993; cf. also comments in Blezer 1997, p. 127.

[42]To my knowledge thus far there is no evidence to support the existence of an equivalent ritual in Buddhist India. In other words, despite numerous references to the notion of *antarābhava* in Buddhist Sanskrit literature I have yet to locate any mention of an actual *antarābhava* liturgy per se. On the early Indian Buddhist funeral rituals, see particularly the studies of Gregory Schopen compiled in Schopen 1997, chpts. 7, 9, and 10. In China, on the other hand, we do find an *antarābhava* (Ch., *chung-yu*) ritual as early as the tenth century, which appears to have been first systematized in the eclectic scripture entitled *Fo-shuo yen-lo wang shou-chi ssu-chung ni-hsiu sheng-ch'i-chai wang-shen ching-t'u ching*

to have been systematically formulated before the thirteenth or fourteenth century, although there is evidence among the Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig scriptures that some features of the practice might have been established as early as the eleventh. Some of the developments of this ritual program may be hidden from us, but enough traces have been left behind to indicate that even in its earliest stages the Tibetan bardo ritual emphasized the purification of sins through ritual actions and prayers devised for the dead which would follow the deceased through the extended process of purification in the bardo and incorporation into a new existence. A distinctive feature of the bardo ritual was the evocation of the journey after death during which the deceased's destiny might still be altered.

2. THE PATH OF WANDERING SOULS

Further examples of ancient Tibetan ideas concerning death, including some Buddhist adaptations of indigenous beliefs relating to the dead, are known from several other manuscripts found at Tun-huang. The most notable work is probably manuscript PT 239/I-II which was studied first by Marcelle Lalou, followed then by Rolf Stein, and later discussed at some length by Ariane Macdonald.[43] This manuscript consists of eighteen folios containing two smaller texts (I-II), the first appearing on the front side (recto) and the second on the back (verso). To the end of the eighteenth side of the first text an additional folio is attached which has been catalogued PT 733 according to the reading of another version of the same work contained in PT 37, fols. 8a-17a.[44] The possible title of the first part of PT 239/I is found on the recto of PT 733, where we read *Lha-yul du lam*

[Scripture of King Yama Rāja concerning the Sevens of Life to be Cultivated in Preparation for Rebirth in the Pure Land]. The origins of this text (abbreviated as *The Scripture on the Ten Kings*) including the history of its production are discussed at length in Teiser 1994.

[43]Lalou 1949 and 1952; Stein 1970; Macdonald 1971, pp. 373-376; cf. also Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979, p. 22, plates 168-175.

[44]Macdonald 1971, p. 373n.613; cf. Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979, p. 37, plates 27-32.

bstan-pa [*Teaching on the Path to the God Realm*].[45] However, the very first sentence of the text, *de-nas gshin-lam bstan-pa* ("following that, the teaching on the path of the dead"),[46] seems to provide a more fitting title given the general subject of the narrative, that is "showing the way of the dead" (*gshin-lam bstan-pa*). Since the text obviously begins as it were already in progress, Macdonald has remarked that this dangling first sentence may indicate that PT 239/I comprises only part of a more complete funerary ritual which was perhaps similar to that described in PT 37.[47]

A central theme of these Tun-huang texts is that of the various paths by which the dead travel. In the particular example of PT 239/I-II the influence of Buddhist ideas becomes quite explicit. Macdonald has argued that in this text we find that the indigenous Tibetan notion of the deceased's path connecting the two opposing regions of gods (*lha-yul*) and ghosts (*gshin-yul*) has now been adapted to the Buddhist notion of rebirth in samsara.[48] Following this view, Yoshiro Imaeda suggests that the text might be situated on the brink of a new beginning in Tibetan religious history—the first stage in the transformation of pre-Buddhist rites into Buddhist practices.[49] Per Kvaerne, on the other hand, adopts a more cynical perspective:

> "When combating the ancient death rituals, Buddhist strategy was to retain at least part of the ancient terminology while systematically identifying it with Buddhist ideas, thus emptying it of its original content. This strategy was in the end so successful that by the 10th or 11th century the ancient beliefs outlined above had apparently been more or less forgotten by the Tibetans, although as

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[45]Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979, plate 171, fol. 19.4.
[46]Macdonald and Imaeda 1978-1979, plate 168, fol. 1.1.
[47]Macdonald 1971, p. 373.
[48]Macdonald 1971, pp. 373-374.
[49]Imaeda 1981, p. 83.

> we shall see, certain elements, now with a completely new significance, were preserved."[50]

Unfortunately, Kvaerne gives no examples of this "ancient terminology". His comments echo Erik Haarh's statement regarding Buddhism's encounter with certain indigenous concepts of the dead:

> "When Buddhism began to spread in Tibet, its representatives recognized on a broad basis the existing traditions, gradually modifying them in conformance to the ideology of the Doctrine [*chos*]. Only where the concept of the Dead and the funeral and ancestral cult were concerned does Buddhism seem to have displayed radical efforts at suppression, so that the literature presents only vestiges of these features of Tibetan culture before Buddhism".[51]

The predominance of animal and possibly human sacrifice[52] in the funerary rituals of the early Tibetans was apparently a major point of contention with the Buddhists, although Samuel has suggested that Tibetan emphasis on this point had more to do historically with the marking of "Tibetan Buddhist dominance over local pre-Buddhist deity cults" than with traditional Buddhist prohibitions against taking life.[53] The disavowal and self-righteous condemnation of ritual sacrifice among Buddhists in Tibet is clearly reflected, for example, in a revealing passage from a text included in the *Bar-do thos-grol*, wherein the deceased (and living audience) is warned that sacrifices performed by the surviving relatives may lead to rebirth in hell:

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[50]Kvaerne 1985, p. 8.
[51]Haarh 1969, p. 316.
[52]The Chinese T'ang records suggest that the Tibetans of pre-Buddhist times may have practiced human sacrifice. For example, according to Snellgrove and Richardson, at the conclusion of the Chinese-Tibetan treaty of 782/3 "there is a long description of sacrifices and of the participants smearing their lips with the blood of the victims". See Snellgrove and Richardson 1986, p. 93.
[53]Samuel 1994, p. 704.

> "When visions of the higher realms arise, should your relatives (*gson-po*) near the place you left behind sacrifice many sentient beings dedicated for the benefit of the dead, you will have impure visions and become extremely angry. This will cause you to be reborn in hell. So whatever [your relatives] do in the place you left behind, do not grow angry, but cultivate love."[54]

At the same time of the Buddhist attacks on indigenous practices, the early Buddhists of Tibet, as Imaeda has observed, "attempted on the one hand to find in the terminology of the pre-Buddhist religion a meaning that conformed to Buddhist doctrine, and on the other hand, to transpose the indigenous notions onto those Buddhist ideas more or less related."[55] Clearly, these ancient concepts were never wholly suppressed and, indeed, some were fully assimilated with only minor variation into the Buddhist world view that very quickly came to dominate the culture of Tibet. The old concepts of the wandering soul (*bla-'khyams-pa*), of its ritual ransom (*glud*), and of its guidance (*lam-bstan*) are just a few examples of ideas that have survived and flourished in Buddhist Tibet.

Thus far the particular ancient materials introduced above have offered only vague and inexplicit ideas concerning the hereafter. Clearly, the emphasis in those sources was on ritual to guarantee a safe passage for the dead and protection against their certain hostility. In Tun-huang manuscript PT 239/I, on the contrary, a dominant Buddhist orientation prevails and the afterdeath state is described in very clear terms. Here the deceased's journey may follow one of three negative paths (*ngan-song, durgati*): one

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[54]The passage appears in *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, cited here from version B1a, fol. 166.2-4: *mtho ris kyi snang bar shar ba'i tshe : shul du nye ba gson po rnams kyis gshin po'i don du bsngos nas : sems can mang pos srog bcad de mchod sbyin byas pas : khyod ma dag pa'i snang ba shar te : zhe sdang drag po skyes nas : des mtshams sbyor byas nas dmyal bar skye bar 'gyur bas : shul du las ci byas nas 'dug kyang khyod rang zhe sdang ma skye bar byams pa sgom shig*. See also discussion in Mumford 1989, pp. 80-92, 195, and 197.

[55]Imaeda 1981, p. 84: "En même temps ils ont essayé d'une part, de trouver dans la terminologie de la religion pré-bouddhique un sens confrome à la doctrine bouddhique (par exemple *phan*, cf. p. 18 et note 12), et d'autre part, de transposer les notions indigènes en conceptes bouddhiques plus ou moins apparentés (comme *dga' dang skyid-pa'i yul* en *bde-skyid gnam* ou *lha-yul*)."

leading into hell (*na-rag*), another into the realm of the hungry ghosts (*yi-dwags*, *preta*), and a third into the realm of animals (*dud-'gro*). Each of the three lower realms is associated with a specific bodhisattva—Avalokiteśvara, Gaganagañja, and Durgatipariśodhana, respectively—whose mantra the deceased (*tshe-'das-pa*) is called upon to invoke in order to escape that particular evil destiny. A fourth and final path is indicated which leads upward to the northern summit of Mount Meru called Alaka, divine residence of Buddha Vajrapāṇi. This is the sacred realm of the gods, a place of peace and perfect happiness (*bde-skyid phun-gsum tshogs-pa'i lha-yul dam-par 'gro-ba'i lam*). Ultimately, the deceased must endeavor to reach this realm. The apparent purpose of the text was thus to ensure a safe and successful journey upward. This goal was accomplished in part by calling the dead by name (*ming-nas smos-nas* or *ming-nas brjod-nas*), offering descriptions of the specific topography of the lower worlds, and reminding (*'dren-pa*) the deceased of the proper mantras to be recited.

Given its principle objective and the prominent role played by the mantra of Durgatipariśodhana-rāja,[56] it is almost certain that the first part of manuscript PT 239/I was connected intimately to the ritual cycle of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra*.[57] This important *Yoga-tantra* was among the earliest Buddhist Sanskrit works translated into Tibetan.[58] The tantra offered a distinctive funeral litany centered around the cult of *Kun-rig* (*Sarvavidyā*) and associated with the Buddha Vairocana.[59] It included

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[56]PT 239: *nama sarva durgade pariśodani rajaya tathagataya arihadi samyag sambudaya dadyatha om śodani sarvapapaviśodhani śudde viśudde sarva karma avarana viśudde svahā*. Compare to Skorupski 1983, p. 126 (5b.10-13): *sarvadurgatipariśodanarājanāmatathāgatahṛdayaṃ niścārayāṃ āsa / OṂ śodhane śodhane sarvapāpaviśodani śuddhe viśuddhe sarvakarmāvaraṇaviśuddhe SVĀHĀ*. ["As soon as he [Vajrasattva] uttered this formula, the evil destinies of all living beings were checked, every approach into hell, animal life and tormented spirits was eliminated, severe sufferings were removed and many living beings became happy", p. 7].

[57]This has already been noted by Imaeda in his excellent study of the nine versions of the Tun-huang work *Skye-shi'i lo-rgyus* (cf. PT 218, 219, 220, 366, 367; Stein 99, 151, 345, 69, fol. 17). See Imaeda 1981, pp. 77-78.

[58]Snellgrove 1987, p. 183.

[59]Tsepak Rigzin 1986, p. 8; cf. also Skorupski 1983; Tucci 1988, p. 197.

instructions on confession rites (*bshags*), ransom certificates (*byang-bu*), fire offerings (*sbyin-sreg*), churning the depths of hell (*na-rak dong-sprug*), contemplating wrathful deities (*khro-bo'i lha sgom-pa*), and cremation (*ro-sreg*).[60] In this regard, the ritual appears clearly to have been somewhat akin to the practices later developed more fully in the bardo rituals of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Indeed, it is likely that the death rituals belonging to the cycle of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* might have served a similar function in the ritual life of Tibetans in the centuries leading up to the systematization of Tibetan Buddhist liturgies like those prescribed in the *Bar-do thos-grol*. The Tun-huang manuscript PT 239/I may represent an early and very much simplified prototype of this larger program.

The prevalence of both sacrificial rites and the purification practices of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* in Tibetan funerary custom is indicated in the later texts accompanying the rituals of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. In the famous *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* [*Direct Introduction to the Bardo of Becoming*] from that cycle, we find reference to various rituals performed for the dead, including the sacrifice of animals and the purification of sins.[61] This is noteworthy because several features of Tibetan death practices are identified that clearly coexisted alongside the liturgy of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, but may in fact have actually predated it.

> "Again, when the *kang-ka-ni* ritual of the dead is recited for your benefit and the *Ngan-song sbyong-ba* [*Durgatipariśodhana*, *Purification of Evil Rebirths*] and so forth are performed for your sake, you will see with subtle clairvoyance impurities and the performers being distracted and so forth, breaking their vows and commitments , and acting carelessly. In this way, you will be aware of their

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[60]For details, consult the text and translation in Skorupski 1983, pp. 81-87 and 319-323.
[61]See B1a, fols. 166.2-169.5.

> lack of faith and disbelief, fear and sinful actions, and inaccuracies (*ma-dag-pa*) in the liturgy and rites, and so you will think 'Alas! They are deceiving me, certainly they are deceiving me!' Thinking this you will become very saddened and depressed, and losing your respect and devotion, you will disbelieve and lose faith, and so you will certainly go to the lower realms."[62]

Here, we see two rituals mentioned explicitly by name, the so-called "*kang-ka-ni* ritual of the dead" (*gshin-po'i cho-ga kang-ka-ni*) and the "purification of evil rebirths" (*ngan-song sbyong-ba*). I have as yet been unable to identify precisely the *kang-ka-ni* rite, although Evans-Wentz remarked that it involved the recitation of mantra believed to transmute sacrificial food into acceptable offerings for the dead.[63] The second ritual mentioned is clearly a reference to the practices associated with the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*, which seems to support the claim that these older rituals had survived and persisted in the face of newer and perhaps more competitive ritual developments represented in such texts as the *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*.

A striking feature of the *Bar-do thos-grol* passage quoted above is its explicit criticism of those who perform the rites improperly and with poor attitude. Could it be that this might also imply some questioning of the true effectiveness of the older rituals over and against the instructions of the *Bar-do thos-grol* itself? In the earlier rites, such as

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[62] B1a, fols. 167.5-168.5: *yang khyod kyi don du gshin po'i cho ga kang ka ni 'don pa dang : ngan song sbyong ba la sogs pa* [168] *khyod kyi don du byas kyang : de ma dag pa dang : g.yeng ba la sogs pa byas pa dang : dam tshig dang sdom pa mi gtsang ba dang : bag med pa'i spyod pa de khyod kyi mngon shes phya mos mthong nas 'ong gi : de la khyod ma dad pa dang : log lta skyes pa dang : 'jigs shing skrag nas las nag po la sogs pa dang : chos spyod dang cho ga ma dag pa rnams kyang shes nas 'ong gi : der khyod kyi bsam pa : kye ma 'di rnams kyis bdag bslus so : nges par bslus so snyam nas shin tu yi mug ste : mi dga' ba chen po dang bcas te : dag snang mos gus ma skyes kyi steng du : log lta dang ma dad pa skyes nas 'ong bas : des mtshams sbyor byas nas nges par ngan song du 'gro bas.*

[63] Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 171n.1. In like manner, Thurman translates *kang-ka-ni* as "exorcistic food-offering rites". See Thurman 1994, p. 178. According to the *Bod-rgya tshig-mdzod chen-mo* (p. 7), the Tibetan term "*kang-ka*" refers to a type of bird, a crane or heron, with a black head and white back that feeds on corpses. Synonyms include *kang-bya* and *dur-bya*. As a ritual *kang-ka-ni*, therefore, may refer to the common Tibetan practice of "sky-burial" or vulture-disposal.

those in the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra* (but clearly not in the related Tun-huang manuscript PT 239/I), it would appear that prayers and ritual actions emphasized the purification of the dead, and particularly of the corpse, over that of the "soul". Later, in the bardo rituals, such as those accompanying the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, we encounter a slight shift of emphasis away from the body and more on the consciousness of the deceased, with particular stress placed on the importance of guiding the consciousness through the long process of purification in the bardo and incorporation into a new existence. This concept of an extended period between death and rebirth has a rich history in Tibet, and is thus a subject that requires further discussion.

3. TRANSITIONS—THE BUDDHIST *ANTARĀBHAVA*

Although we can cite evidence of a pervasive Buddhist orientation in the old Tibetan documents from Tun-huang on the subject of death and the afterlife, very little is known about the status of the Buddhist intermediate-state doctrine during Tibet's imperial age (seventh through ninth century). We do know, however, that in Tibet the idea surfaces as a distinctive doctrine sometime during the early decades of the eleventh century among certain *tantric* groups. It seems that when the Indo-Buddhist *antarābhava* theory entered the Tibetan religious arena from India it had already been reconfigured and embellished as a distinctively tantric idea and, in Tibet, was initially absorbed into the indigenous socio-religious patterns that had survived the influx of Buddhism, only later to emerge as a thoroughly Tibetanized concept.

As we might expect, the earliest Tibetan notion of a postmortem transitional state was developed from a non-Tibetan prototype based on the Indo-Buddhist model expounded in the Abhidharma literature, particularly that of the Sarvāstivāda school. In that model, following closely the patterns set forth by Vasubandhu (400-480), four stages in the life-

cycle of a sentient being were recognized: (1) birth (*upapatti-bhava*), (2) the period from birth to the moment of dying (*pūrvakāla-bhava*), (3) death itself (*maraṇa-bhava*), and (4) the period between death and the next birth (*antarā-bhava*).[64] Over time changes in the interpretation of this scheme were brought on by a synthesis of the orthodox Abhidharma perspective and particular esoteric *tantric* strategies. The merger inspired further innovations in both theory and practice.

In the following section, I will first review some of the principal Indian Buddhist texts that put forth the *antarābhava* theory and then offer a few historical observations on the development of some of the more significant Tibetan changes and points of divergence from the earlier Indian concepts. I will conclude by examining the major sources that exerted a profound influence on the creation in Tibet of a coherent liturgical system constructed around the bardo theory. This so-called "bardo ritual" (*bar-do cho-ga*) is best exemplified by the ritual program of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* belonging to the text cycle *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* of Karma-gling-pa (b.ca. 1352).

The Indian Concept

In an earlier study I attempted to establish a thematic link between the Buddhist *antarābhava* and the Vedic and post-Brāhmaṇic *pitṛloka*.[65] My goal in that paper was to set up certain questions regarding the conceptual origins of the *antarābhava* in Buddhist discourse. In particular, I was interested in the specific factors that might have led to the early Buddhist appropriation of the Vedic *gandharva* in discussions of the postmortem intermediate-state. I do not intend to repeat my earlier arguments here since my conclusions were based for the most part on rather impressionistic grounds. The main

[64]As we shall see, later Tibetan schema would identify this fourth stage, the Indian form of the intermediate-state, by the expression "bardo of becoming" (*srid-pa'i bar-ma-do*).
[65]Cuevas 1996.

questions I raised, however, still remain to be adequately addressed by specialists in the field, although it would appear that some answers may soon be forthcoming. In this regard, the recent work of Robert Kritzer deserves explicit mention. In a series of concise and well-documented articles based on primary Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese sources (most of which are not available in western languages), Kritzer offers important preliminary materials for a detailed textual history of the *antarābhava*.[66] The following summary of the Indian Buddhist literature on this subject is based fundamentally on the contributions of Kritzer and a few scholars before him.

Among the early schools of Buddhism in India the status of the *antarābhava*, of literally "existence" (*bhava*) in an "interval" (*antara*), inspired considerable controversy. Not all of the sects accepted the theory, most notably the Theravāda.[67] The problem it seems, as formulated for example in the *Kathāvatthu* [*Points of Controversy*] of Moggaliputta Tissa (second century B.C.E.),[68] centered around divergent interpretations of a *sūtra* expression "completed existence within the interval" (*antarābhavūpagaṃ*).[69] One view was that this phrase supported the existence of an intermediate period of a week or more before rebirth. The counter position based itself on the fact that such an intermediate period was never taught explicitly by the Buddha. Citing references to the Buddha's statement that there are only three realms of existence—desire (*kāma-dhātu*), form (*rūpa-dhātu*), and the formless (*arūpa-dhātu*)—the opponents (i.e., Theravādins) argued that an intervening realm could not be included in those cateogories and thus does not exist. To complicate matters even more, the schools that did proclaim the

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[66]See Kritzer 1993, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 1999a, and 1999b.; cf. also Dietz 1994 and Blezer 1997, pp. 6-13.
[67]The schools that rejected the *antarābhava* are usually listed as follows: Theravāda, Vibhajyavāda, Mahāsāṅghika, and Mahīśāsaka. Some of the schools that accepted the theory were: Sarvāstivāda, Saṃmitīya, Pūrvaśaila, and Dārṣṭāntika. See Bareau 1955, pp. 283 & 291; Wayman 1974, p. 227.
[68]See Sangharakshita 1985, pp. 81-83; Akira 1990, pp. 90-91, 109-110
[69]See Aung & Davids 1969, pp. 212-213; Blezer 1997, Appendix II, Work-Editions, pp. 19-20.

antarābhava, such as the Sarvāstivāda and Sautrāntika, were not always in agreement as to how that term should best be understood. It was to this purpose that Vasubandhu in his monumental *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* [*Commentary on the Treasury of Abhidharma*] codified the theories of the *antarābhava* and compiled all the arguments in favor of its existence. In later centuries, the views expressed in the *Abhidharmakośa*, representing essentially the position of the Mūlasarvāstivāda, became subsequently the standard presentation of postmortem transition adopted by the Tibetans in the earliest phases of the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet.[70]

The third chapter of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, entitled *Lokanirdeśa* [*Exposition of the World*], contains a number of descriptive epithets for the *antarābhava* aimed at proving its reality. Bear in mind that in this context the term *antarābhava* is employed interchangeably to refer to both the postmortem "state" of transition and to the "subtle entity" that abides there. In the relevant sections, Vasubandhu attempts to establish through scholastic reasoning the existence and essential characteristics of the liminal being. His presentation can be summarized in five basic points, all of which have been explored in some detail by Vallée Poussin, Pruden, and Dietz.[71] First, the *antarābhava* passenger is defined as "that being which arises between the existence at death and the existence at rebirth between (these) two locations in order to gain rebirth".[72] Second, the *antarābhava* must exist because (1) it is called by that name in the relevant scriptures; (2) it is a *gandharva*;[73] (3) it is named among the five *anāgāmin*;[74] and (4) it is substantiated

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[70]The Mūlasarvāstivāda was the monastic rule (*vinaya*) generally adopted in Tibet during the reign of Emperor Khri-srong-lde-btsan (740-797). See Tucci 1988, p. 111; Snellgrove 1987, p. 431.

[71]See Vallée Poussin 1923-31; Vallée Poussin (Pruden) 1988; Dietz 1994.

[72]English translation in Dietz 1994, p. 157; cf. also Vallée Poussin (Pruden) 1988, p. 383.

[73]On this being in the context of the *antarābhava*, see Wijesekera 1945; Cuevas 1996. For an informative discussion of non-Buddhist parallels to *antarābhava*, see Kritzer 1999a.

[74]Among the so-called "non-returners"—those individuals who, having left this world, are born in a Pure Land where they will be set to achieve eventual buddhahood—the reference here is to the *antarāparinirvāyin*, one who obtains nirvāṇa in the transitional state.

in the *Satpuruṣagati-sūtra* of the *Madhyamāgama.*[75] Third, the form of the *antarābhava* resembles that of the beings in the realm where it is to be reborn. Fourth, the *antarābhava* is seen by the beings of its class and by those with the pure divine eyes.[76] Moreover, its organs are complete, no one can resist it, and it cannot be turned away. Because the *antarābhava* eats fragrance it is called *gandharva*, literally "that which eats (*arvati*) odors (*gandham*)".[77] The *gandharva*, in turn, is the access (*sagamana*) through which the *antarābhava* emerging from its previous existence (*pūrvakālabhava*) reaches its new existential course (*gati*).[78] This leads us to point five, rebirth occurs when the mind (*mati*), troubled by intense Oedipal desire upon the sight of its future parents having sex, is propelled into a new existence.[79] The *gandharva* enters the womb and becomes male if it is attracted to its future mother and repulsed by its father, or female if attracted to its future father and repulsed by its mother. The disruptive thoughts of desire and hatred cause the mind to cohere to the semen and blood found in the womb. At that point the aggregates (*skandhas*) coagulate, the *antarābhava* perishes, and the embryo is conceived.[80]

As Kritzer has shown, these descriptions found in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* were not actually the earliest or even most detailed doctrinal exposition of the *antarābhava* in India.[81] That particular qualification is reserved for the enormous compilation *Mahāvibhāṣā* [*Great Commentary*],[82] a second century Abhidharma commentary on the Sarvāstivādin *Jñānaprasthāna-śāstra* [*Treatise on the*

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[75]Dietz 1994, p. 158; Vallée Poussin (Pruden) 1988, p. 386.
[76]Dietz 1994, p. 159; Vallée Poussin (Pruden) 1988, p. 392.
[77]Vallée Poussin (Pruden) 1988, p. 393.
[78]Cuevas 1996, pp. 283-284.
[79]Kritzer 1999b.
[80]On the stages of development of the embryo, see Norbu 1987; Kritzer 1998b.
[81]Kritzer 1997, p. 90-91.
[82]See Sangharakshita 1985, pp. 91-92.

Establishment of Knowledge].[83] The former work is extant only in Chinese translation[84] and its chapter on *antarābhava* has yet to be critically examined in western-language sources. Kritzer notes that Vasubhandu's explanation of the *antarābhava*, and particularly his account of the Oedipal moment of rebirth "can be traced more directly to the *Vibhāṣā*, which contains a description of the same sequence of events very similar to his own".[85] This fact becomes strikingly evident upon close comparison with the content of that text's relevant section.[86] Here we find several elaborate proofs for the existence of *antarābhava* with citations from various *sutra* passages adduced as evidence. Many of the topics discussed are already familiar from Vasubandhu's own account, including the three conditions necessary for conception (i.e., the mother must be healthy, the parents must be engaged in sexual intercourse, and a *gandharva* must be present), the five types of *anāgamin* and the *antarāparinirvāyin*, the mechanism of rebirth,[87] and the special characteristics of the liminal being.[88] Points of divergence between the *Vibhāṣā* and *Abhidharmakośa* are also evident. Kritzer suggests that a study of these differences may help scholars "understand the extent to which the great philosopher Vasubandhu deviates from Sarvāstivāda".[89] At any rate, we can conclude that the Sarvāstivādins and related schools, including the Sautrāntikas and Mahāyāna Yogācārins, posited and firmly supported the existence of a postmortem intermediate-state and that this basic concept had been formalized by at least the fifth century.

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[83]Chinese translation by Saṅghadeva and Buddhasmṛti in 383. See Sangharakshita 1985, p. 91; Nakamura 1987, p. 105n.19. Kritzer has suggested that the *Vibhāṣā* exposition of *antarābhava*, and hence that of Vasubandhu as well, may have relied on the detailed accounts of the intermediate-state in the *Yogācārabhūmi*. See Kritzer 1999a.

[84]A recent Japanese translation is cited in Kritzer 1997, p. 88 (Kimura Taiken, Nishi Giyū, and Sakamoto Yukio, *Kokuyaku Issaikyô. Bidon-bu*, vol. 7-17).

[85]Kritzer 1998b, p. 31 (1030).

[86]Given in Kritzer 1997, pp. 15-28 (87-74).

[87]See Kritzer 1999b.

[88]Kritzer 1999b.

[89]Kritzer 1999b, p. 13 (89). Kritzer notes: "...it is often suggested that Vasubandhu, who ended his career as a Yogācārā, was a Sautrāntika at the time of writing the *Abhidharmakośa*."

In India the *antarābhava* was known also in several *sutra-s*, notably the *Ayuṣman-nanda garbhāvakrānti-nirdeśa-sūtra* [*Sutra on Nanda Entering the Womb*][90] and the *Saddharma-smṛtyupastāna-sūtra* [*Sutra on Stability in Contemplation of the True Dharma*].[91] Both scriptures at some point during their evolution appear to have been influenced by Abhidharma interpretations.[92] The *Garbhāvakrānti-sūtra* is extant in four versions, apparently the earliest being the Chinese translation *Pao t'ai ching*.[93] This latter recension does not include many of the details found in the the later versions from the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*. These omitted elements are typically glossed in the Abhidharma texts, which suggests that the *Garbhāvakrānti-sūtra* may have been influenced by that tradition later in its development.[94] Briefly, the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya* versions detail the progression of the *antarābhava* from the final moment of death, to conception in the future mother's womb, and subsequently through each week of fetal development. The *Garbhāvakrānti-sūtra* was unique on several levels. First, the text appears to have been the primary source for the elaborate descriptions of postmortem transition in the *Manobhūmi* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*.[95] Secondly, in Tibet the text came to represent one of the most significant canonical sources for Tibetan medical literature on the science of human reproduction and growth.[96] Third, it provided a standard source for later Tibetan presentations on death, transition, and rebirth. In particular, we find that the *sutra* was

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[90]Tib., *'Phags-pa tshe-dang ldan-pa dga'-bo la mngal-du 'jug-pa bstan-pa zhes-bya-ba theg-pa chen-po'i mdo*. In Derge 58; Bu-ston 121; Fifth Dalai Lama 42; Peking 760.13; Coni 1029.14; Lhasa 57. According to the Lhasa edition, the text was translated from Chinese by one 'Gos-chos-grub.

[91]Tib., *'Phags-pa dam-pa'i chos-dran-pa nye-bar gzhag-pa*. In Derge 287; Bu-ston 9; Fifth Dalai Lama 267; Peking 953; Coni 926; Lhasa 289. The Chinese translation was completed in 542-543 and the Ṭibetan in the eleventh or twelfth çentury. The translators traditionally associated with the text are Śāntākaragupta, Abhayākaragupta, Śākyarakṣita, Vidyākaraśānti, Subhūticandra, Aḍitacandra, and Pa-tshab Tshul-khrims-rgyal-mtshan. Supposedly, the *sūtra* and its translation are discussed at length by the Fifth Dalai Lama V and in the Derge and Urga redactions. See Li-kouang 1949; Nakamura 1987, p. 175; cf. also Arthur Waley's translation of the section on *antarābhava* from the Chinese in Conze 1954, p. 283.

[92]On the Abhidharma position of the *Garbhāvakrānti-nirdeśa-sūtra*, see Kritzer 1998a, p. 12.

[93]For bibliographical references, see Kritzer 1998a, pp. 4-7 (12-9).

[94]Ibib., p. 4 (12); Kritzer 1999b., p. 4.

[95]This, according to Kritzer, is the argument of Nobuyoshi Yamabe (1996), see Kritzer 1999b, p. 4.

[96]Norbu 1987.

cited often in the relevant Tibetan literature of those schools who relied most heavily on the Indian canonical sources.[97]

The *Saddharma-smṛtyupastāna-sūtra* was an influential resource for descriptions of Buddhist cosmology, particularly those aspects pertaining to the various hells and *preta* realms.[98] The *sutra* also includes elaborate discussion of as many as seventeen individual *antarābhava-s*.[99] Some features of this exposition appear to accord with certain Abhidharma interpretations and clearly resemble descriptions that we encounter in the later Tibetan literature. As an illustration consider the following passage translated from the Chinese version of this *sutra*:

> "When a human being dies and is going to be reincarnated as a human being...when the time of his death is approaching he sees these signs: he sees a great rocky mountain lowering above him like a shadow. He thinks to himself, "The mountain might fall down on top of me", and he makes a gesture with his hand as though to ward off this mountain. His brothers and kinsmen and neighbours see him do this; but to them it seems that he is simply pushing out his hand into space. Presently the mountain seems to be made of white cloth and he clambers up this cloth. Then it seems to be made of red cloth. Finally, as the time of his death approaches he sees a bright light, and being unaccustomed to it as the time of his death he is perplexed and confused. He sees all sorts of things such as are seen in dreams, because his mind is confused. he sees his (future) father and mother making love, and seeing them a thought crosses his mind, a

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[97]See for instance Tsong-kha-pa's (1357-1419) discussion of bardo in ZBNA; cf. also Mullin 1996, pp. 184-198. Also of note is the remarkably clear and orthodox Dge-lugs-pa presentation found in ZHKS; cf. Lati Rinbochay & Hopkins 1979.

[98]Nakamura 1987, p. 175; Sadakata 1997, p. 50; .

[99]Li-kouang 1949, pp. 52-53; Blezer 1997, p. 11. This text also includes details about the conditions in which the liminal beings died, their state of mind in *antarābhava*, and so forth.

> perversity (viparyāsa) arises in him. If he is going to be reborn as a man he sees himself making love with his mother and being hindered by his father; or if he is going to be reborn as a woman, he sees himself making love with his father and being hindered by his mother. It is at that moment that the Intermediate Existence is destroyed and life and consciousness arise and causality begins once more to work. It is like the imprint made by a die; the die is then destroyed but the pattern has been imprinted."[100]

Henk Blezer has noted that this passage is not found in the Tibetan translations, but unlike him I tend to think that this suggests the text was probably altered after the eleventh or twelfth century and may reflect some Tibetan influence on subsequent Chinese recensions, like the one consulted by Waley.[101] The cryptic references to the crumbling mountain, white and red colors, and the bright light are all reminiscent of standard Tibetan *tantric*—more accurately, *anuttara-yoga* [supreme yoga]—descriptions of the process of dying and of the concurrent dissolution of the psychophysical constituents. For example, the image of the "falling mountain" is usually found as the first of four so-called "fearsome enemies" (*'jigs-pa'i dgra-bzhi*) experienced during the collapse of the elements earth, water, fire and wind.[102] The white and red colors are descriptive of the experience of dissolution of the subtle levels of consciousness. White refers to the "white appearance" (*snang-ba dkar*) envisioned after the disintegration of the "eighty ordinary conceptions" (*rang-bzhin brgyad-cu'i kun-rtog*), while red is the "red increase" (*mched-pa dmar*) that arises after the previous "mind of white appearance" (*sngang-ba dkar lam-*

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[100] Translation by Arthur Waley in Conze 1954, p. 283.

[101] Blezer 1997, p. 25n.111: "This passage is lacking in the Tibetan version. Even though the Chinese translation is five to six centuries older than the Tibetan one, this part still might have been inserted sometime before the sixth century rather than having been omitted at some point in a version translated into Tibetan, regarding the unusual nature of the passage discussed this last option does not seem too unlikely." Blezer's eagerness to keep this passage firmly planted in the sixth century makes for some awkward twists of logic.

[102] See for example the typical description given by Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol in BRDS (I-Tib-1982), vol. 8, fol. 663; cf. also Tsele Natsok Rangdrol 1987, p. 69.

pa'i sems) disappears.[103] The "bright light" is quite obviously a reference to the "clear light of death" (*'chi-ba'i 'od-gsal*), the most fundamental level of reality-itself. In the final analysis, all of these components indicate clearly a rather late date for the above quoted passage. This does not mean that the passage is insignificant, but simply that the *Saddharma-smṛtyupastāna-sūtra* may have been updated in response to current trends. Throughout the centuries the *sutra* must certainly have continued to play an active role in the religious lives of its audience.

The conflation of a Buddhist tantric model on the "orthodox" sutric concept of *antarābhava* inspired much innovation. Certainly by the fifth century the Abhidharmic descriptions of the transitional state had solidified following a standardized model first established in works such as the *Mahāvibhāṣā*. Subsequent transformations and amendments to this scheme would not be widespread until tantrism began its sweep across northern India in the seventh and eighth century.[104] It would appear that the Buddhist *siddha* cults of this period and beyond co-opted, reinterpreted, and embellished the earlier *antarābhava* theory in the context of specific metaphysical and soteriological projects that were in part defined and codified in the esoteric and highly controversial scriptures called *tantra-s*, in this case particularly the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*[105] and *Hevajra-tantra*,[106] both of the *anuttara-yoga* class. These siddha traditions were introduced into Tibet through diverse and complicated channels beginning in the eleventh century.

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[103]These stages are described in some detail in Lati Rinpoche & Hopkins 1979; Gyatso 1982; Cozort 1986.

[104]On the siddha tradition in India, see especially Dasgupta 1976; Sanderson 1985; Sanderson 1988; White 1996. On the development of the tradition in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, see Dowman 1985; Snellgrove 1987, pp. 117-303; Samuel 1993, pp. 406-435.

[105]See Bhattacharyya 1931; Bagchi 1965; Wayman 1980; Nakamura 1987, pp. 332-334.

[106]See Snellgrove 1959; Nakamura 1987, pp. 334-335.

A paucity of sufficient historical material has for the most part prevented scholars from solving many of the problems relating to the introduction and establishment of the siddha traditions in Tibet. Despite a multitude of informative biographies of the most renowned Indian and Tibetan *tantrika-s*, an exhaustive and thorough history of the Tibetan siddha movement has not yet appeared.[107] This fact makes it difficult for us to explore the Tibetan developments of a tantric concept of *antarābhava* within well-documented contexts. Nevertheless, we can scrutinize and re-evaluate the existing Tibetan sources, many of which are biographical in nature, and begin to trace various conceptual developments and patterns of dissemination. In this regard, a chronological focus on the classification schemes of the concept bardo and attention to details pertaining to lineal relations should give us some indication of the movement of this idea in Tibet. The development of specifically tantric theories of the *antarābhava* on Tibetan soil will be the focus of the remaining sections of this chapter.

Tantric Developments and the Siddha Transmissions in Tibet

One of the most striking developments of the Tantric reinterpretation of the *antarābhava* was the expansion of the term's meaning to include a plurality of diverse intermediate-states. It seems that this broadening of the semantic horizon may have already been prepared for by the doctrine of the "four *bhava-s*" and by some earlier conflation of the Abhidharma intermediate-state theory with the doctrine of the *tri-kāya*.[108] The triune arrangement of a Buddha's body in combination with aspects of the *antarābhava* concept was then grafted onto the elaborate twofold yogic system of what the Tibetans were later to classify as the *anuttara-yoga tantra-s* (*Guhyasamāja*, *Hevajra*, etc.), in which were described the successive stages referred to as the "phase of

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[107]See note 99 above.
[108]See discussion below and comments in Blezer 1997, pp. 28-30.

generation" (*utpannakrama*, *bskyed-rim*) and the "phase of completion" (*saṃpannakrama*, *rdzogs-rim*). Various lineages of this tantric program were introduced into Tibet as early as the eleventh century.

Briefly, according to standard Tibetan exegesis of the *anuttara-yoga* program the generation phase involves a series of contemplative techniques designed to transform the practioner's awareness of mundane forms, sounds, and thoughts and to enhance recognition of these as expressions of specific deities, mantras, and pristine wisdom (*ye-shes*). During this phase the meditator gradually constructs a mandala and imagines that he and the central deity are one and the same entity. This self-visualization process is said to function similarly to "bringing the Three-Bodies to the path" (*sku-gsum lam-'khyer*). In this context, "path" refers to the generation-stage meditation itself, and the Three-Bodies—"reality body" (*chos-sku*, *dharmakāya*), "enjoyment body" (*longs-sku*, *saṃbhogakāya*), and "emanation body" (*sprul-sku*, *nirmāṇakāya*)—are linked conceptually to a threefold scheme related in various degrees to death (*'chi-ba*), intermediate-state (*bar-do*), and rebirth (*srid-pa*), depending on the particular system employed.[109] The completion phase of tantric practice on the other hand consists of a series of advanced yogic techniques involving the radical manipulation of the psychophysical energies, i.e., the winds (*lung*) and seminal fluids (*thig-le*), within the channels (*rta*) of the subtle body (*phra-ba'i lus*) to bring about transformative non-ordinary states of consciousness—in many cases said to be identical with the experience of dying. The overall purpose is to develop direct experience of the pristine wisdom (*ye-shes*) induced by the four types of bliss (*dga'-ba bzhi*). It is during this phase that there is

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[109]See for example the Dge-lugs-pa system described in Kelsang Gyatso 1994, pp. 75-93. This threefold scheme was not new. The Sarvāstivādins and related schools, including the Sautrāntikas and Mahāyāna Yogācārins, posited the existence of an intermediate-state in the context of a threefold dynamic: death (*maraṇa*), transition (*antarābhava*), and rebirth (*upapattibhava*). As we shall see, this triune arrangement was reinterpreted in some circles to refer to two separate types of *antarābhava* such that death was now discussed as a "bardo of dying" (*'chi-kha'i bar-do*) and rebirth as a "bardo of becoming" (*srid-pa'i bar-do*).

an actual "blending" (*bsres-ba*) of the Three-Bodies on the path, by which the successful practitioner is said to overcome ordinary death, intermediate-state, and rebirth and to attain the trinity of buddhahood. The history of the bardo in Tibet is essentially the history of conceptual developments within the framework of this twofold system of tantric practice. A variety of distinctive reformulations of the bardo concept occurred as a consequence of the proliferation of instructional lineages adhering to the diverse teachings of particular yogis, which seems to have begun in Tibet by at least the eleventh century and probably much earlier. These particular ideas can be traced most clearly in the surviving literature of the Bka'-brgyud and Rnying-ma traditions.

Tibetan tantric interpretations and descriptions of the intermediate-state (*bar-do*) are largely contained in a genre of literature known as *gdams-ngag*, or "instructional advice" (Skt., *upadeśa*), widely known from the nineteenth-century comprehensive Tibetan anthology of 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas (1813-1899), the *Gdams-ngag mdzod* [*Anthology of Instructions*].[110] This category of literature comprises teachings on a multitude of yogic and contemplative techniques believed to have been inspired from the "hands-on" experience of advanced *tantrika-s*. All the major and minor Tibetan traditions possess such a literature.[111] As Kapstein has noted, "*gdams-ngag* has come to form the basis for an important set of distinctions among Tibetan Buddhist traditions, corresponding in general to distinctions of lineage, while crosscutting distinctions of sect".[112] The preeminence of lineage and sect in this context cannot be overstated. In Tibet, as it was in India, the transmission of esoteric religious instruction was dominated

[110]See DMDZ.
[111]For a brief summary of the different traditions, see Kapstein 1996.
[112]Kapstein 1996, p. 276. The author clarifies his terms (p. 285n.2): "By *sect*, I mean a religious order that is distinguished from others by virtue of its institutional independence; that is, its unique character is embodied outwardly in the form of an independent hierarchy and administration, indepedent properties and a recognizable membership of some sort. A *lineage* on the other hand is a continuous succession of spiritual teachers who have transmitted a given body of knowledge over a period of generations but who need not be affiliated with a common sect."

in most cases by direct oral exchange between teachers and disciples. Over time these individual teaching lineages (*brgyud, parampara*) crystallized and were arranged into distinct systems of practice associated with particular sects. The vast majority of these "schools" emerged in Tibet during the Buddhist renaissance of the eleventh century—these were known as the "new" or *Gsar-ma-pa* traditions in contrast to the "old", the *Rnying-ma-pa*.

By the thirteenth century the numerous traditions of *gdams-ngag* circulating throughout Tibet had been classified into an eight-fold scheme.[113] This is not the place for a discussion of all eight categories since only a few of them are of interest to us here; namely the instructional precepts of the Rnying-ma-pa and Bka'-brgyud-pa (Gsar-ma) traditions. The former set of instructions were derived primarily from the teachings of Padmasambhava (c.717-775) and Vimilamitra (discussed in the next section). The *gdams-ngag* affiliated with the various Bka'-brgyud lineages were derived essentially from the teachings of the Indian siddhas Tilopa (Tillipa, 988-1069), Nāropa (1016-1100), and Maitripa and transmitted to a few notable Tibetans such as Mar-pa Chos-kyi-blo-gros (1012-1097) and Khyung-po Rnal-'byor Tshul-khrims-mgon-po (d.ca.1135). Much of the *gdams-ngag* literature of both the Bka'-brgyud and Rnying-ma traditions provide details and commentary on tantric methods for manipulating and purifying the ordinary dying experience and subsequent period of transition. Consequently, the texts of these teaching lineages provide crucial materials for reconstructing the history of the bardo in Tibet. In this section we will examine some of the earliest developments of this theory by surveying several of the most distinctive and influential formulations of the Bka'-brgyud *gdams-ngag* from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries.

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[113]Kapstein 1996, pp. 276-277.

I mentioned above the proliferation of teaching lineages affiliated with specific tantric masters. Although it is certain that there were many early lineages that transmitted distinctive *antarābhava* doctrines these have not been clearly identified or demarcated in western academic studies. Fortunately, the same cannot be said of the Tibetan sources. To my knowledge one of the earliest, if not the first, explicit reference to the variety of bardo lineages prevalent in Tibet can be found in a thirteenth-century work by Yang-dgon-pa Rgyal-mtshan-dpal (alias Lha-gdong-pa, 1213-1287), a follower of the Stod subsect of the 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud tradition. In his text entitled *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi lo-rgyus tshe-rings-ma'i zhus-len* [*Responses to the Questions of Tshe-ring-ma, History of "Deliverance from the Perilous Straits of the Bardo"*]—a commentary on one of Mi-la-ras-pa's (1040-1123) famous "songs of realization" (*rnam-mgur*)—Yang-dgon-pa stated that he knew of at least fifteen separate *gdams-ngag* on bardo.[114] From among this group he provided the names of eight distinct lineages, many of which can be easily identified. In order of appearance they are:

1. Tradition of Jo-mo Lha-rje-ma [=Ma-cig Zhwa-ma]
    a. Oral Bardo Lineage (*bar-do snyan-rgyud*)
    a. Ḍākiṇī Bardo (*bar-do mkha'-spyod*)
    b. Direct Perception Bardo (*bar-do mngon-sum-ma*)
2. Father Lineage of Paṇḍita Mngon-shes-can (*pha-brgyud-kyi gdam-ngag paṇḍita-mngon-shes-can*)
3. Bardo Instructions of Btsun-mo-can (*btsun-mo-can-gyi bar-do'i gdam-ngag*)
4. Bardo Instructions of Shangs-po Ri-bo-che (*shangs-po ri-bo-che-pa'i bar-do'i gdam-ngag*)

[114] YGLG, vol. 2, fol. 548.

5. Bardo of Dbyar-ston Dbu-ma-pa, Nectar Vehicle Dispelling Illness (*dbyar-ston dbu-ma-pa'i bar-do nad-sel bdud-rtsi thegs-pa*)
6. Bardo Instructions of Mnga'-bdag Nyang-ral-pa-can (*mnga'-bdag nyang-ral-pa-can-gyi bar-do gnad-kyi gdam-ngag*)
7. Three Distinct Bardo Systems of the Six Doctrines (*chos-drug-gi bar-du[o] lugs mi-'dra-ba gsum*)
8. Essential Bardo Explanations of Zhang Rin-po-che (*zhang rin-po-che'i bar-do'i dmar-khrid*)

Since this list appears to be one of the earliest classifications of bardo traditions in Tibet, I will take Yang-dgon-pa's scheme as paradigmatic and frame my discussion accordingly. Readers will note that in my discussion I have rearranged the above list in roughly chronological order and included additional lineages wherever appropriate. Except for entry number 6, all of these lineages can be linked to the so-called "New" (*gsar-ma*) traditions (in contrast to the "Old", *rnying-ma*) that began to emerge in Tibet during the Buddhist renaissance of the eleventh century. Undoubtedly, the most significant of these newer sects in terms of bardo speculation and innovation was the Bka'-brgyud-pa, although a few exceptions can be noted (and have been in Yang-dgon-pa's list, e.g., the Lam-'bras tradition of Jo-mo Lha-rje-ma). This having been said our primary focus in the section that follows will be on the Bka'-brgyud transmissions.

The most influential siddha teachings on bardo in Tibetan history can be traced without much difficulty to the Indian mahāsiddhas Tilopa and Nāropa. The latter codified a diverse system of yogic instruction that would come to be widely known in Tibet as the "Six Doctrines of Nā-ro" (*nā-ro chos-drug*)—corresponding to lineage number 7 in Yang-dgon-pa's list. The set of tantric instructions received through Tilopa, Nāropa's mentor, provided the fundamental source for this sixfold teaching. According to Tilopa's

biographies, he is said to have received bardo transmissions from several teachers, namely Lavapa (Kambala), Lalitavajra, and Subhaginī.[115] The latter figure, a female yoginī, can be identified also as Sumati Samantabhadrī and the Sukhasiddhī mentioned in Tilopa's *Ṣaḍdharmopadeśa* [*Instructional Advice on the Six Doctrines*]—she is believed to have been a contemporary of Nāropa's consort Niguma.[116] Each of these teachers bestowed upon Tilopa teachings drawn from specific *tantra-s*. Subhaginī transmitted bardo instructions from the *Mātṛ-tantra-s* [*Mother Tantras*], and specifically the *Śrī-Ḍākārṇava-mahāyoginī-tantrarāja*.[117] The teachings of Lavapa and Lalitavajra were taken from the *Hevajra-tantra*. Arguably, Tilopa's distinctive contribution to the tradition was his success in bringing these diverse instructions together and organizing them into a coherent system. He later transmitted the teachings in that form to his disciple Nāropa. This transmission provided the fundamental source for Nāropa's famous "Six Doctrines" program

Tilopa's particular understanding of bardo is known from his brief *Ṣaḍdharmopadeśa*, which is included in some recensions of the Tibetan *Bstan-'gyur*.[118]

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[115]See Torricelli 1995, p. 69n.32; cf. also the short biography of Kambala with reference to his companion Lalitavajra in Dowman 1985, pp. 179-185. According to Rdo-rje-mdzes-'od, Tilopa received bardo instructions not from Lavapa directly but from his pupil Rol-pa'i-rdo-rje. See Khenpo Könchog Gyaltsen 1990, p. 44. This would be more in line with Dowman's dating of Lavapa in the mid-to-late ninth century. Tilopa is alleged to have received four special transmissions: (1) *pha-rgyud gsang-ba 'dus-pa*, (2) *ma-rgyud 'khor-lo bde-mchog*, (3) *rmi-lam dang bar-do'i gdams-ngag*, (4) *'pho-ba dang grong-'jug*. An alternative list: (1) *sgyu-lus 'pho-ba*, (2) *rmi-lam*, (3) *'od-gsal*, (4) *gtum-mo*.

[116]See Torricelli 1995, p. 69n.30. The influence of female siddhas during this period deserves more thorough attention . Lately, I have been struck at just how many female teachers one runs across in these biographical materials, especially in connection with the bardo transmissions. On the religious roles of women in tantra, see particularly Miranda Shaw's controversial study in Shaw 1994; also Klein 1985 and 1995; Campbell 1996; Gyatso 1998, pp. 243-264.

[117]Tib., *Bde-mchog mkha'i-'gro rgya-mtsho'i-rgyud*. See Roerich 1949, pp. 388, 390, and 497.

[118]Tib., *Chos-drug-gi man-ngag shes-bya-ba*. In *Bstan-'gyur* (Sde-dge), vol. 53, no. 2330, fols. 540.6-7; translated in Mullin 1997, pp. 27-29. According to the colophon, the text was translated by Nāropa and Mar-pa Chos-kyi-blo-gros in Kashmir. The anonymous text which immediately follows the *Ṣaḍdharmopadeśa* in *Bstan-'gyur* (Sde-dge), vol. 53, no. 2331 (also in DMDZ, vol. 5, fols. 68-89)—the *Ājñāsamyakpramāṇa-nāma-ḍākinyupadeśa* (Tib., *Bka'-yang dag-pa'i tshad-ma zhes-bya-ba mkha'-'gro-ma'i mang-ngag*)—has traditionally been attributed to Tilopa. However, Torricelli has suggested that the text (at least the version in DMDZ) "can be ascribed to the authorship of Nāropa" or "to a tradition very close to that *mahāsiddha*". See Torricelli 1995, p. 31. I tend to agree with this conclusion based on comparative examination of the topics addressed in both versions of the text. In the DMDZ version, we encounter references to three individual bardo states—(1) *skye-shi bar-do*, (2) *rmi-lam bar-do*, and (3)

Here we find a simple explanation of bardo in relation to the practice of generation-phase meditation:

> "The yogin at the time of death,
> Brings the sense-powers and the elements together,
> Gathering the winds of the sun and moon at the heart,
> Giving rise to a variety of yogic concentrations (*samādhi*).
> When consciousness is directed to external objects,
> They appear like objects in a dream.
> The visions of death appear for seven [or] seven-times-seven days,
> Then surely there will be rebirth.
> At that time, cultivate deity yoga,
> Or, remain in the state of suchness.
> Afterwards, when it is time to be reborn,
> By the master's deity yoga,
> Cultivate deity yoga with all that appears and exists.
> By that [method] the bardo will be blocked.
> This is the instructional advice (*upadeśa*) of Sukhasiddhi."[119]

'chi-ka dus-kyi bar-do. These three states are correlated to the yoga of apprehending the clear light at death, of purifying the dream-state, and of blocking the next birth (described originally as related techniques, but not as individual states), and each in turn corresponding to the attainment of one of three buddha-bodies (*tri-kāya*). The scheme is well-correlated not only to components of the "four bhava-s" doctrine but also to Naropa's three-fold classification of the bardo (see below). The passages which describe this system (including also the colophon identifying Nāropa and Mar-pa as translators) are completely absent in Sde-dge 2331. It seems to me then that this more elaborate discussion is an interpretive gloss on the earlier verses—apparently authored by Tilopa himself—dealing with the techniques for blocking rebirth (*srid-pa khegs-pa*), and that the "author" of that gloss would probably have been Nāropa (or maybe even Mar-pa). I wish to thank Henk Blezer for pointing me in the direction of the DMDZ version of this text and for helping me refine my thoughts on the issue of its possible authorship (e-mail correspondence of August 3, 1999).

[119] *rnal 'byor 'chi ba'i dus kyi tshe / dbang po rnams dang 'byung ba sdus / zla nyi rlung rnams snying gar 'dus / rnal 'byor ting nge 'dzin sna tshogs 'char / rnam shes phyi rol yul song na / rmi lam yul bzhin sna tshogs snang / bdun bdun dus tshe 'chi snang dang / de nas skye bar 'gyur ba nyid / de tshe lha yi rnal 'byor sgom / yang na de nyid ngang la gzhag / de rjes skye la phyogs pa'i tshe / mnga' bdag lha yi rnal 'byor gyis / snang srid lha yi rnal 'byor sgom / des ni bar do khegs par 'gyur / sukhasiddhi'i upadeśa'o.*

The practice of deity yoga (*lha-yi rnal-'byor*) is recommended for those intent on stopping the bardo experience, which is likened to the vision of dreams. As we shall see, the matching of the bardo to the dream state had definite and far-reaching consequences. Also in Tilopa's verse the phrase "obstructing the bardo" (*bar-do khegs-par 'gyur*) is similar to the idea of "closing the womb door" (*mngal-sgo 'gag-pa*) later expounded by disciples of subsequent generations beginning with Mi-la-ras-pa (1040-1123) and Sgam-po-pa (1079-1153). To close the womb door is essentially to block the liminal being (*bar-do*) from entering a new birth. This specialized technique, accomplished through various tantric yogas, appears to have been one of the hallmarks of the esoteric reinterpretation of earlier *antarābhava* formulations (cf. the *Garbhāvakrānti-sūtra*).

In the hands of Nāropa, Tilopa's chief disciple, the *antarābhava* concept seems to have achieved an unprecedented complexity. Indeed he appears to have been the innovator of the three-fold system which became standard in most subsequent Tibetan works affiliated with the so-called "Six Doctrines" tradition. The basic pattern involved a conflation of some aspects of the doctrine of the "four *bhava-s*", the *tri-kāya* theory, and *both* the generation and completion phases of the *anuttara-yoga*. The result was a precise yogic system that emphasized the contemplative "mixing" or "blending" (*bsres-ba*) of these triune components in a practice commonly referred to as "bringing the Three Bodies to the path" (*sku-gsum lam-'khyer*). Nāropa's exposition of this program is found in the *Karṇa-tantra-vajrapada* [*Vajra Verses on the Oral Tradition*] included, for example, in the Peking *Bstan-'gyur*:[120]

> "The teaching of the thoroughly profound meaning of the direct introduction to the bardo,

[120]Tib., *Snyan-rgyud rdo-rje'i tshig-rkang*. Variant Sanskrit title, *Karṇa-tantra-vajragāthā*. In *Bstan-'gyur* (Peking) 4632, fols. 140b-142b (also in Sde-dge, vol. 53, no. 2338). Translated in Mullin 1997, pp.35-41

> Cuts off the bardos of [1] birth-to-death, [2] of dreams, and [3] of becoming.
> Without correspondence there are signs,
> Without seeing there is supreme seeing.
> This is natural awareness, radiant, empty, non-conceptual, free from all obscurations,
> Great bliss, the sphere of reality, utterly pure pristine wisdom,
> By its own nature indivisible and naturally manifest as the three bodies. Behold!
> In the three types of bardo, unrealized embodied beings should blend
> The generation stage, illusory body, and clear light as the Dharmakāya.
> The elements—earth, water, fire, and air—dissolve gradually.
> After the eighty [conceptual minds] have ceased, three visions pass.
> White, red, and mind are combined within the lotus.
> Recognize the clear light and mix inseparably mother and child."[121]

From the verses in question we find reference to several sets of three—three bardo states, three buddha bodies, three levels of practitioner, and three visions during the dying process. All of these categories are conceptually interlinked in some fundamental way and the goal of the so-called "bardo yoga" (*bar-do rnal-'byor*) is to effect their union at specific points during the meditation session or at the actual moment of death.

To my knowledge, Nāropa's three-fold bardo system and the yoga of blending each of its elements was a pioneering development in the history of the bardo concept. It is certainly possible (and indeed likely) that such a program had already been developing

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[121] *bar do ngo sprod yang dag zab don bstan / skye shi rmi lam srid pa bar do gcod / ltar med ltas pas / mthong med mthong ba'i mchog / rang rig / gsal / stong / mi rtog / sgrib g.yogs bral / bde chen chos dbyings ye shes rnam par dag / rang bzhin dbyer med sku gsum rang shar ltos / ma rtogs lus ldan bar do rnam gsum la / bskyed rim / sgyu lus / 'od gsal chos skur bsre / sa chu me rlung 'byung ba rim kyis thim / brgya cu 'gag nas snang ba gsum 'das te / dkar dmar sems gsum chu skye nang du 'dzom / 'od gsal ngos zin ma bu dbyer med 'dres.*

among the siddha cults in northern India and that Nāropa was simply inheriting the insights and techniques of these earlier groups—perhaps mainly through Lavapa and his teacher Tilopa. At any rate, what may have been his truly distinctive contribution (and the tradition seems to agree) was his integration and systematization of six disparate practices; hence the moniker "Six Doctrines of Nā-ro". Whatever its provenance, we can see in the system associated with him the introduction of certain key innovations in how the *antarābhava* would later be conceived in Tibet. First and foremost, the concept of a single transitional period was expanded to include three separate intermediate-states—"bardo of birth-to-death" (*skye-shi bar-do*), "bardo of dreams" (*rmi-lam bar-do*), and "bardo of becoming" (*srid-pa bar-do*). In these individual states were incorporated conceptual features of the earlier Abhidharma doctrine of the "four *bhava-s*" (especially, the *pūrvakālabhava*, *maraṇabhava*, and *antarābhava*) in combination with aspects of more mundane transition-states, particularly between sleeping and waking—all of this within the broad context of the two-stage meditative program of the *anuttara-yoga*.

As we see above in Nāropa's scheme, the three bardo states can be defined as follows: (1) the deceptively long period between birth and death was identified as the first bardo state, called "bardo of birth-to-death" (*skye-shi bar-do*); (2) the ethereal interval between sleep and waking consciousness was appropriately termed the "bardo of dreams" (*rmi-lam bar-do*);[122] and, (3) the transitional period between death and rebirth, the original and familiar *antarābhava*, was given the name "bardo of becoming" (*srid-pa bar-do*). All three intermediate phases were said to provide an opportunity for yogic practice, the goal of which was to bring the three divine embodiments of buddhahood into each of these transitional moments. In later generations this three-fold categorization of

[122]According to Yang-dgon-pa, Nāropa's development of a "dream bardo" was inspired by a quote from the *Rdo-rje 'chang-gi rgyud* (Skt., *Vajradhāra-tantra*) which read: *ji ltar sgyu ma rmi lam dang / ji ltar bar do'i srid yin pa* ("just as a dream is illusory, so is the bardo existence. See YGLG, vol. 2, fol.547.3-4.

the intermediate-state inspired even further elaborations—the possibilities seemed endless. At any rate, there were some who seem to have remained true to Nāropa's triune system such as Khyung-po Rnal-'byor Tshul-khrims-mgon-po (d.ca.1135)[123] and Zhang G.yu-brag-pa Brtson-'grus-grags-pa (1123-1193),[124]—traditions 4 and 8 in Yang-dgon-pa's list, respectively. From surviving literature it would appear that both figures propounded meditative programs constructed around the same three bardo states outlined in Nāropa's teachings. Khyung-po Rnal-'byor is unique, however, in that he is alleged to have received directly in visions the bardo tradition of Sukhasiddhī (Tilopa's female mentor) and in person the transmission of Nāropa's consort Niguma.[125]

Not much later we find an alternative threefold categorization in both the *Bar-do'i dmar-khrid-kyi zhal-gdams* [*Advice on the Practical Instructions on Bardo*] of Sgam-po-pa Bsod-nams-rin-chen (alias Dwags-po Lha-rje, 1079-1153)[126] and in a rare work by his disciple Phag-mo-gru-pa Rdo-rje-rgyal-po (1110-1170).[127] The latter text may have represented the oral lineage of Jo-mo Lha-rje-ma (tradition 1 in Yang-dgon-pa's list), since she is cited as one of Phag-mo-gru-pa's (and Sgam-po-pa's) teachers, but we cannot be certain at this point.[128] Lha-rje-ma (alias Ma-cig Zhwa-ma, 1062-1150) was a promiscuous disciple and consort of Rma Lo-tsā-ba (1044-1089) and an early preserver of the "path and fruit" (*lam-'bras*) instructions affiliated with the Sa-skya-pas.[129] Since

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[123]See BDNS.

[124]Zhang Rin-po-che was a disciple of Sgam-po-pa's nephew Dbon Sgom-pa Tshul-khrims-snying-po (1116-1169). See NPBD. I am grateful to Dan Martin for kindly directing my attention to this rather rare text. On the life and work of Zhang, see the latter's informative studies in Martin 1992, 1996 and 1999.

[125]See Kapstein 1980 and 1991.

[126]BDZH.

[127]See PHMO. I am indebted to Dan Martin for this reference (e-mail correspondence of June 17, 1998).

[128]See Roerich 1949, p. 226; Khenpo Könchog Gyaltsen 1990, p. 208.

[129]According to legend, Ma-cig Zhwa-ma had sought the help of Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas for a seemingly incurable venereal disease which she had contracted as a result of practicing with so many different male yogis. It was her relationship with Dam-pa Sangs-rgyas that may have caused Roerich to confuse Ma-cig Zhwa-ma for Ma-cig Lab-sgron-ma. See Roerich 1949, pp. 220-226; Lo Bue 1994; Edou 1996, p. 111; cf. also Diemberger and Hazod 1994. On the history of the Zhwa-ma family in connection with the deity Bkra-shis-'od-'bar, the *chos-skyong* of the Bo-dong tradition, see Hazod 1998, esp. p. 67n.32.

her teacher was a student of Khyung-po Rnal-'byor it is possible that her bardo system was similar, if not identical, to that of Niguma.

At any rate, in the aforementioned bardo texts of Phag-mo-gru-pa and Sgam-po-pa the transitional state is again divided into three phases, but the names and descriptions diverge somewhat from Nāropa's model discussed above. Here, the threefold system is developed around specific techniques employed during the completion stage of tantric yoga rather than meditation at the three levels of subtle consciousness (waking, sleeping, and postmortem transition). Hence, the first bardo (*bar-do dang-po*) is correlated with "apprehending the clear light (*'od-gsal la ngos-bzung-ba*), the second with "apprehending the illusory body" (*gnyis-pa sgyu-lus ngos-bzung-ba*), and the third with "closing the womb door" (*gsum-pa mngal-gyi sgo-dgag-pa*).[130]

Not surprisingly, we find similar bardo presentations expounded in later works by authors affiliated with the Dge-lugs-pa tradition, such as its founder Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang-grags-pa (1357-1419)[131] and the eighteenth century Dbyangs-can-dga'-ba'i-blo-gros (alias A-kya Yongs-'dzin).[132] It is well known that Sgam-po-pa was a respected Bka'-gdams-pa monk and the first Bka'-brgyud scholar to combine the special "mental purification" (*blo-sbyong*) teachings of Atiśa Dīpaṃkara (982-1055)[133] with what would later be referred to as the Mahāmudrā (*phyag-rgya-chen-po*) instructions of Tilopa, Nāropa, and Maitrīpa. The convergence of these two diverse teaching lineages (referred to as "the convergence of the two rivers, bka' and phyag", *bka'-phyag chu-bo gnyis-dres*)[134] became the hallmark of the Dwags-po Bka'-brgyud tradition—the source of the four

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[130]In Phag-mo-gru-pa's text these three are listed as follows: (1) *bar-do dang-po ('od-gsal)*, (2) *gnyis-pa sgyu-lus sgom-pa*, (3) *gsum-pa mngal-sgo dgag-pa*.
[131]See ZBNA; cf. also Mullin 1996.
[132]See YANG; cf. also Lati Rinpochay & Hopkins 1979.
[133]For a general overview of this system, see Sweet 1996.
[134]Roerich 1949, p. 560.

major and eight minor sub-schools of the Bka'-brgyud lineages. The chief disciple of Sgam-po-pa's student Phag-mo-gru-pa was 'Jig-rten-mgon-po (1143-1217), founder of the 'Bri-gung Bka'-brgyud.[135] It was through this tradition (via the Sa-skya-pas of Zhwa-lu) that Tsong-kha-pa received the transmission of Nāropa's Six Doctrines.[136] Consequently, Tsong-kha-pa and the subsequent generations of his Dge-lugs-pa followers maintained the bardo system of the Phag-mo-gru and 'Bri-gung lineages.

Previously we noted the importance of individual *tantra-s*, particularly those of the *anuttara-yoga* class, as the root of the various Tibetan siddha teachings on bardo. Among the earliest and most celebrated of these esoteric scriptures was the *Guhyasamāja-tantra* considered one of the most influential texts among the "new" (*gsar-ma*) Tibetan religious sects that had begun to appear in the late tenth century, at the beginning of the period of the so-called "later diffusion of the doctrine" (*bstan-pa phyi-dar*).[137] In the *Blue Annals* (1476-1478) we learn that Nāropa had received a *Guhyasamāja* transmission from Tilopa, who had received it earlier from Nāgabodhi.[138] This, however, does not appear to have been the main teaching lineage which reached Tibet. According to Dge-lugs-pa scholar Paṇ-chen Bsod-nams-grags-pa (1478-1554), that lineage came from a tradition received through two of Nāropa's contemporaries, the Bengali scholar Abhijñā (Mngon-shes-can) and Za-hor Yoṣa (Btsun-mo-can).[139] It was this transmission that was eventually passed to Mar-pa (1012-1097), who then brought it to Tibet (discussed below). The particular *gdams-ngag* on bardo associated with this *Guhyasamāja* lineage is identified in Yang-dgon-pa's list as traditions 4 and 5, respectively. These sets of instruction are said to belong to the "father lineage" (*pha-rgyud*) as that is the tantric

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[135]See particularly BDGR, pp. 62-105; GKCB, p. 966; LRCB, pp. 352-365.
[136]Mullin 1997, p. 14.
[137]On this period in Tibetan religious history, see GJGT, fols. 169-173; GKCB, esp. pp. 939-996; Dudjom 1991, pp. 524-527.
[138]Roerich 1949, p. 361.
[139]Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa 1996, pp. 63-64.

category typified by the *Guhyasamāja-tantra*. Later Tibetan doxographers, like Bsod-nams-grags-pa, distinguish between father and mother *tantra-s* mainly on points of emphasis. These distinctions can be quite complicated, but it is generally held that the father *tantra-s* place stress on methods for attaining the illusory body (*sgyu-lus*), whereas the mother *tantra-s* emphasize techniques for apprehending the clear light (*'od-gsal*).[140] Because of its formal resemblance to the dream-state, the bardo is frequently regarded in this context as a component of the illusory body yoga, and hence affiliated most closely with the father *tantra-s*.

Regrettably, I have yet been unable to trace the specific bardo instructions of Mngon-shes-can (Abhijñā) and Btsun-mo-can (Yoṣa) in the available Tibetan sources. Presumably both lineages would have been preserved by Mar-pa, a student of these two masters (and the chief disciple of Nāropa as well), but no specific bardo instructions linked directly to Mar-pa have surfaced. Nevertheless, some ideas may be recovered from the works of his disciples (see below). I do not believe, however, that it is too far a stretch to suggest that these presentations might have resembled the basic bardo exposition of Nāropa, though apparently not derived explicitly from his lineage. Thus, the so-called "father tradition" of *gdams-ngag* on bardo would most likely have comprised instructions on the three "blendings" and the practice of bringing the Three Bodies to the path. By Mar-pa's time this three-fold scheme seems to have been the preferred format.

Nāropa's chief Tibetan disciple was the translator Mar-pa Chos-kyi-blo-gros. Our knowledge of the specific features of Mar-pa's bardo doctrine is at best incomplete. From some of the recorded teachings of his primary students, namely Mtshur-ston Dbang-nge

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[140]Boord and Losang Norbu Tsonawa 1996, pp. 46-54; cf. also Kelsang Gyatso 1994, p. 49.

(alias Dbang-gi-rdo-rje)[141] and Mi-la-ras-pa, we can gather that Mar-pa's system must have been referred to as the practice of "cutting off the bardo with the mind" (*bar-do blos-chod-pa* or *bar-do blo-nas gcod-pa*).[142] The idea expressed in this phrase is clearly reminiscent of Tilopa's "obstructing the bardo" (*bar-do khegs-pa*) whereby the womb door leading to a new existence is blocked or closed through various yogic techniques, the most effective of which is deity yoga—a generation-phase visualization. In the work entitled *Bar-do blos-chod-kyi man-ngag* [*Oral Precepts on Cutting Off the Bardo with the Mind*], indicated as one of the special instructions of Rje-btsun Lho-brag-pa (alias Mar-pa) and possibly authored by Mtshur-ston himself (but certainly representing his tradition),[143] the bardo is described as three-fold based on the triune doxographical scheme of basis (*gzhi*), path (*lam*), and fruit (*'bras-bu*), where "basis" is the "correct view" (*lta-ba*) of "suchness" (*de-bzhin-nyid*), "path" is the method for cultivating (*sgom-pa*) that view, and "fruit" is the attainment of the goal of practice.[144] Curiously, there is also reference to alternative traditions which speak of four, five, and even six individual bardo states, although these are not elucidated.[145] Such reference to various sets of bardo ennumerations suggests to me that the text may actually have been composed sometime after Mtshur-ston Dbang-nge, following the early decades of the twelfth century.

In the first presentation, the "bardo of the basis, ascertaining the view" (*lta-ba gtan-la 'beb-pa gzhi'i bar-do*), emphasis is placed on the importance of connecting (*sbrel*) at the

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[141]On whom, see LRCB, pp. 68-69; Roerich 1949, pp. 414-416. For what it is worth, the family estate of Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (the Grong-smad) claimed descent from this Bka'-brgyud teacher. See Richardson 1998, p. 451.

[142]See BDLC and MLAM.

[143]In the larger text from which the *Bar-do blos-chod* is drawn a transmission lineage is presented as follows (DMDZ, fol. 206): Mar-pa, Mtshur Dbang-nge, Stod-lung 'Ga'-ras, Slob-dpon Nyi-ma-lung-ba, Bde-gshegs Rin-po-che. The actual author of this text may therefore have been Bde-gshegs Rin-po-che, but we cannot be certain.

[144]Jeffrey Hopkins has suggested that the structure of the categories basis, path, and fruit may have been based on specific features of the Mādhyamika, particularly the coordinated sets of the two truths (conventional and ultimate), the two practices (method and wisdom), and the two buddha bodies (form and truth). See Hopkins 1996, p. 177.

[145]DMDZ, vol. 8, fol. 227.

moment of death with the lama's instructions pertaining to natural awareness (*rang-gi rig-pa*) and reality-itself (*chos-nyid*). This is called the "direct personal introduction" (*ngo-sprod*). The second topic, the "bardo of the path, practicing meditation" (*sgom-pa nyams-su len-pa lam-gyi bar-do*), is divided according to the capacity of each individual, whether the yogi be a superior subitist (*rab cig-car-ba*) or average gradualist (*'bring rim-gyis-pa*)—note that an inferior (*tha-ma*) category is not mentioned. For the superior practitioner, i.e., the one who has successfully recognized the clear light at the moment of death, the visions of the bardo simply do not arise. The average meditator on the other hand must rely on either "emptiness meditation without signs" (*mtshan-med stong-nyid bsgom-pa*) or "deity meditation with signs" (*mtshan-bcas lha-sgom-pa*) in order to achieve the illusory body which will eventually transform into a buddha's divine form. The final topic, the "bardo of the fruit, manifesting the goal" (*don mngon-tu gyur-pa 'bras-bu'i bar-do*) is subdivided into three parts: "persons with direct apprehension" (*gang-zag dngos-su bzung-ba*), "ways in which the three bardos manifest" (*bar-do gsum-gyi 'char-lugs*), and "ways to visualize the instructional advice" (*gdams-ngag gdab-lugs*). What is most relevant for our interests is the second section where we find that the first bardo is identified as the "clear light of reality-itself" (*chos-nyid 'od-gsal*); the second described as the bardo in which one emerges in a mental body (*yid-kyi-lus*); and the third as the bardo in which appear the distorted visions (*'khrul-snang*) of cyclic existence. Without much difficulty these three bardo states can be correlated to Nāropa's three-fold scheme with one very important variation. The first bardo comes at the final moment of the dying process when the nature of reality-itself suddenly dawns. We will see that this bardo, which is reminiscent of the Abhidharma *maraṇa-bhava*, is later referred to particularly in Rnying-ma-pa presentations as the "bardo of dying" (*'chi-kha'i bar-do*). Could it be that this bardo category was developed by Mar-pa and his immediate followers? It is noteworthy that Nāropa's "bardo of birth-to-death" (corresponding

conceptually to the *pūrvakāla-bhava* in Abhidharma sources) does not seem to be represented in this presentation, while his "bardo of dreams" and "bardo of becoming" correspond to the second and third bardo states described above.

With Mi-la-ras-pa we find an explosion of multiple bardo phases derived essentially from the instructional lineage of Nāropa received through Mar-pa. In the *Lam blo-nas gcod-pa bar-do ngo-sprod-kyi gdams-ngag zab-mo* [*Profound Instructional Advice on the Direct Introduction to the Bardo, Cutting Off the Path with the Mind*]—representing instructions granted by Mi-la-ras-pa to his student Ras-chung Rdo-rje-grags (1083-1161)—three overarching bardo states are elucidated:

(1) "basic bardo of embodied beings" (*lus-ldan gzhi'i bar-do*)

(2) "bardo of the signs of definite knowledge" (*nges-shes rtags-kyi bar-do*)

(3) "bardo of the fruit of direct encounter" (*ngo-sprod 'bras-bu'i bar-do*)[146]

This is not the place to discuss the complex structure and technical details of the numerous subdivisions of the bardo state described in this important text. We should note, however, that this elaborate presentation seems to be rather unprecedented in the Tibetan bardo traditions of this period. It appears then that by the first half of the twelfth century there had already been such a remarkable proliferation of ideas inspired by the generic notion of a period of transition between two states of consciousness that now seemingly every significant experience or phase of existence (*bhava*, *srid-pa*) could be divided into a graded series of intermediate-states.

Indeed, Henk Blezer has made a similar observation but from a slightly different angle. In attempting to point out the continuity of the traditional Abhidharma scheme in

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[146]See MLAM, fol. 48.

the tantric programs of Mi-la-ras-pa, he argues that early in its history the Tibetan term "*bar-(ma-)do*" had come to refer to a rather generic notion of any such intermediate existence, and thus became the semantic equivalent of the Sanskrit "*bhava*" as understood in the Abhidharma context.[147] The fact that the early Tibetan translators did at times employ the term "*srid*"—equivalent to the Sanskrit *bhava*—as translation for the general term "*antarābhava*" is clearly indicated in Akira Hirakawa's *Index to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.[148] The point, then, that I wish to emphasize is that this generalizing of the meaning of the Tibetan term "*bar-do*" as equivalent to the concept *bhava* may have provided the initial spark for the creative formulation of multiple intermediate-states following roughly the traditional scheme of the four *bhava-s*. Consequently, in some of the subsequent Tibetan models the *upapattibhava* became, for example, the so-called *skye-gnas bar-do*, the *pūrvakālabhava* the *skye-shi bar-do*, and the *maraṇabhava* the *'chi-kha'i bar-do*, while the *antarābhava* (the intermediate-state concept proper) remained constant as the *srid-pa bar-do*. It is not certain whether the Indian *antarābhava* was understood in the same way, although clearly the application of certain components of the "four *bhava-s*" theory to a general concept of transition-states was evident in the early system developed outside Tibet by Nāropa.

In any event, the earlier classifications were never abandoned, they were simply incorporated into the burgeoning scheme. For example, in Mi-la-ras-pa's *Lam blo-nas gcod-pa*, Nāropa's original triune arrangement appears with slight variation of

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[147]Blezer 1997, p. 29n.124 (also e-mail communication of July 31, 1999): "...the Tibetan translation of *antarābhava*: *bar mo do'i srid pa* probably provided the term *bar ma do* or *bar do* as an equivalent for what in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* was referred to as *bhava*, whereas in the translation of *antarābhava*, *bhava* was translated by *srid pa* and not by *bar mo do*. This clearly indicates that in Tibetan traditions all *bhava-s* were styled after one *bhava* that according to their perception represented the central or original one, the blueprint of the concept of an intermediate state, the *antarābhava*, *bar ma do'i srid pa*, or in short *bar ma do*, hence, *bar ma do* or *bar do* and not *srid pa*." I am grateful to Henk Blezer for his patience and good humor throughout the many spirited and enlightening e-mail discussions we have shared on this topic.

[148]Hirakawa 1973, p. 29. Alternative equivalents include *srid-pa bar-ma*, *srid-pa'i bar-ma*, and *bar-ma*.

terminology as the divisions of the "bardo of embodied beings" (*lus-ldan gzhi'i bar-do*) and expressed in the following terms: the "bardo of appearance from birth-to-death" (*snang-ba skye-shi'i bar-do*), the "bardo of karmic latencies and dreams" (*bag-chags rmi-lam-gyi bar-do*), and the "bardo of the dark visions of becoming" (*snang-mun srid-pa'i bar-do*).[149] Also the central doctrine of the "path of blending" (*bsre-ba lam*) in conjunction with the Three Body principle is found in the third general category "bardo of the fruit of direct encounter".[150]

We possess another source for Mi-la-ras-pa's instructions on bardo. This is the *'Phrang-sgrol gnad-kyi bar-do la dris-pa lan dang bcas-pa'i brda-don glur-blangs-pa mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba [Song of the Symbolic Meaning of the Questions and Responses on the Essential Bardo, Deliverance from the Perilous Straits entitled "The Golden Rosary"]*, or simply *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* [*Song of the Golden Rosary*], contained in the famous *Mi-la'i mgur-'bum* [*Songs of Mi-la-ras-pa*] of Gtsang-smyon He-ru-ka Sangs-rgyas-rgyal-mtshan (1452-1507).[151] In most cases it would be problematic to make historical claims on concepts believed to have existed in the eleventh century based solely on written evidence known to have been composed or compiled four hundered years later. Indeed, the bulk of the *Mi-la'i mgur-'bum* (1488-1495) is certainly no exception to this rule, but the *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* appears to be somewhat peculiar.

This short work on "deliverance from the dangerous bardo" (*bar-do 'phrang-sgrol*) is one of four chapters presented as instructional songs to the five Tshe-ring-ma Ḍākiṇi-s

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[149]It is not clear whether the phrase *snang-mun srid-pa'i bar-do* might be better translated as "bardo of becoming, illumination and darkness" in reference to the standard dyad of awareness and ignorance.

[150]Mi-la-ras-pa's student, Ras-chung Rdo-rje-grags was possibly the author of a bardo text inspired by these "path of blending" (*bsre-ba lam*) teachings entitled *Bar-do lam-khyer 'khor-'das rgyun-gcod-kyi gdams-ngag*, see MKGR, fols. 129-142.

[151]MLGB, pp. 489-517. Translated in Chang 1962, pp. 333-356.

(chapters 28-31). From the colophon we learn that the song was compiled by Mi-la-ras-pa's disciples Guru Bodhirāja (alias Ngam-rdzong-ras-pa)[152] and 'Od-kyi-mtha'-can (alias Rnal-'byor-pa Zhi-ba-'od).[153] Garma Chang and Charles D. van Tuyl have both observed that the four "Tshe-ring-ma" chapters are the only songs from Gtsang-smyon He-ru-ka's anthology where compilers' names are indicated.[154] Van Tuyl has also argued convincingly based on precise textual analysis that these five chapters, including the *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba*, represent an independent literary unit embedded within the larger narrative of the *Mi-la'i mgur-'bum*. In addition, this unified set of devotional songs appears to be quite older than the rest of the collection, perhaps even dating back to the early twelfth century and actually linked to Bodhirāja and Zhi-ba-'od as is claimed in the individual colophons. In this regard, we should emphasize that the *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* is quoted practically verbatim in Yang-dgon-pa's thirteenth century commentary, the *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi lo-rgyus tshe-rings-ma'i zhus-len*. Hence, there is very little doubt that at least this small piece on bardo predated the *Mi-la'i mgur-'bum* by several centuries. Indeed, the descriptions of the bardo states found in the *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* must have been quite ancient and perhaps roughly contemporaneous with Mi-la-ras-pa himself.

The *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* (chapter 30) relates the story of Bkra-shis Tshe-ring-ma, the leader of the five Tshe-ring-ma sisters, who had been burned by fires started by local shepherds. Angered and critically injured, the Ḍākiṇī requests Mi-la-ras-pa to cure her life-threatening ailment and also to drive out the demons of disease that had subsequently swept through the area. Mi-la-ras-pa consents and performs a cleansing ritual (*khrus-chog*) that restores Bkra-shis Tshe-ring-ma's health. The five sisters show

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[152]On whom, see LRCB, pp. 151-152.
[153]MLGB, p. 516; Chang 1962, p. 354; cf. also Roerich 1949, p. 435. On Zhi-ba-'od, see LRCB, pp. 166-167.
[154]See Chang 1962, p. 688; van Tuyl 1975, p. 24.

their gratitude to the yogi by pledging loyalty to Buddhism and by offering themselves as his spiritual consorts. Moved by their sincerity, Mi-la-ras-pa sings the ***Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba*** as religious instruction to avoid the sufferings of death and the dangers of the bardo (*bar-do 'phrang*). In this song we find references to the familiar *tri-kāya* doctrine, the three "blendings", and a multiple of individual intermediate-states derived from variations on conceptual themes from Nāropa's original triunal system.[155] Each of the various transitional states described by Mi-la-ras-pa are associated with a particular yogic practice by which the meditator can be successfully "delivered from the perilous straits of the bardo" (*bar-do 'phrang-sgrol*).

This particular Tibetan expression, *bar-do 'phrang-sgrol* (perhaps to be identified originally with Mi-la-ras-pa himself), is found in later sources as an alternative name for the general tradition of Nāropa's Six Doctrines.[156] We should note also that the phrase appears with some frequency in the liturgical literature attributed to the *gter-ston-s* Karma-gling-pa[157] and Ratna-gling-pa (1403-1479),[158] as well as in some of the Bon-po *gter-ma* of Dam-pa-rang-grol Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan (1149-1206)[159] and in the works of Bya-btang Nam-mkha'-lhun-grub.[160] In the Dge-lugs-pa tradition, we even find the expression as the centerpiece of a devotional work by the First Paṇ-chen Bla-ma Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan (1567-1662), and in its eighteenth-century commentary by A-kya Yongs-'dzin Dbyangs-can-dga'-ba'i-blo-gros.[161] Interestingly enough, Réne de Nebesky-Wojkowitz makes reference to the difficult passage of dead souls through the

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[155]The six bardos listed are: (1) *snang-mun srid-pa'i bar-do*, (2) *da-res 'khor-'das bar-do*, (3) *rang-bzhin lam-gyi bar-do*, (4) *rmi-lam gnyid-kyi bar-do*, (5) *tha-ma srid-pa'i bar-do*, and (6) *skye-gnas brgyud-pa'i bar-do*. See MLGB, p. 509; Chang 1962, p. 348.
[156]See ZBNA; cf. also Mullin 1996, pp. 34 and 112; Mullin 1997, pp. 21 and 156n.6.
[157]See *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*. Discussed in Chapter 2.
[158]See GRLP and BDRL.
[159]See *Thos-grol bar-do 'phrang-grol chen-po* in BPCT.
[160]See *'Byung-'jig 'byung-thim-gyi smon-lam bar-do'i 'phrang-sgrol* in ZKGK, fols. 757-779.
[161]See LZBP; Lopez 1997b; cf. also YANG.

window of the Tsi-'u-dmar-lcog dbug-khang, a protector-temple of the wrathful guardian Tsi'u-dmar-po at Bsam-yas, Tibet's first Buddhist monastery (est. 775-779):

> "According to popular belief this chamber is supposed to be the place where *Tsi'i dmar po* sits in judgement of the souls of men, an activity assigned otherwise by orthodox traditions to *Yama*, the ruler of the hells. The chamber is said to have only one extremely narrow window, and legends claim that through this fissure the souls of the dead have to squeeze through at night-time, in order to appear before *Tsi'u dmar po*. As some of them find it rather difficult to pass, one is able—as the legend tells—to see around this window numerous scratches which these unfortunate spirits had caused by their nails. Some people even allege that a strong smell of blood comes out of this window, as inside the chamber, after the judgement had been pronounced, the souls are cut to pieces by the acolytes of *Tsi'u dmar po*."[162]

The image of perilous passage between narrow pathways (*'phrang-lam*) was and continues to be associated in Tibet not only with the postmortem journey but also with topological features at sacred pilgrimage sites known to be particularly dangerous. Safe passage through these narrow straits is akin to moving successfully through the bardo after death.[163] We see then that the concept *bar-do 'phrang-sgrol* has a long and varied

[162]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 167-168. An interesting footnote is added to this gruesome tale (p. 168n.4): "A similar legend tells that a messenger (*pho nya*) of *dPal ldan lha mo* or *Tsi'u dmar po* stands near the death-bed of a dying man to carry his "last breath" either to the chapel of *dPal ldan lha mo* in the *Jo bo gtsug lag khang* or to the *Tsi'u dmar lcog dbug khang*. The "last breath" is seen by these deities in the form of a corpse. This body is later cut up on the chopping-block and its blood, flesh and bone are distributed to the ferocious gods and goddesses. The above-mentioned chapel is situated on the upper floor of the Lhasa Cathedral and it is dedicated to an extremely ferocious form of *dPal ldan lha mo*. It contains a smaller room whose entrance is, just like in Samye, kept closed. The souls of the dead who are supposed to enter this room, have to creep inside through a narrow fissure". On the deity Tsi'u-dmar-po, see also Ladrang Kalsang 1996, pp. 114-116; Pommaret 1998b, pp. 83-85.

[163]On the *bar-do 'phrang-lam* in pilgrimage literature, see especially GANG, p. 55; ZHAB, p. 500; BYNG, pp. 29-31; Stein 1988, p. 11 and n.34; Dowman 1997, p. 127 and 195; Huber 1999, p. 233n.28. I am grateful to Toni Huber for kindly pointing me to these references.

history in Tibetan religious culture. It also seems to have become in later years a rather common but evocative expression for the distinctive qualities of the transitional experience and techniques for liberating oneself from its dangers. In this idea we see a clear continuity between the ritual beliefs of ancient Tibet concerning death and the vulnerable passage of souls and those ideas preserved by the later Buddhist tradition of a prolonged and dangerous postmortem transition.

Mi-la-ras-pa's *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* provides the central reference point for a thirteenth-century exposition of the intermediate-state doctrine and its attendant practices composed by Yang-dgon-pa (alias Lha-gdong-pa, 1213-1287), a follower of the "Western" (*stod*) subsect of the 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud tradition.[164] In a series of six short commentarial works, Yang-dgon-pa frames his discussions around the *'phrang-sgrol* or "perilous passage" theme. In keeping with the tradition established by Mi-la-ras-pa, he makes reference throughout these texts to a variety of intermediate-states and describes many of them in some detail. There does appear nevertheless to be a standard enumerated list from which Yang-dgon-pa derives his interpretations. In his *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi gzhung-gdam-pa* [*Instructions on the Text "Deliverance from the Perilous Straits of the Bardo"*], six individual bardo states are delineated:

(1) "bardo of the natural state" (*rang-bzhin gnas-pa'i bar-do*)[165]

(2) "bardo of ripening from birth-to-death" (*rnam-smin skye-shi'i bar-do*)[166]

[164]Mi-la-ras-pa's text also plays a prominent role in Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol's seventeenth-century *Bar-do spyi'i-don thams-cad rnam-par gsal-bar byed-pa dran-pa'i me-long*, where it is frequently juxtaposed to the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. Apparently for Rtse-le Rig-'dzin both texts were paradigmatic of their respective traditions—the Bka'-brgyud *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol* versus the Rnying-ma *Bar-do thos-grol*. See BRDS; cf. also Tsele Natsok Rangdrol 1987.

[165]YGLG, vol. 2, fols. 564.3-567.6: *'phrang sgrol 'khor 'das so mtshams dbye ba kun gzhi gnad kyi ngo sprod* (563.5-564.1).

[166]YGLG, vol. 2, fols. 567.6-587.5; cf. fol. 564.1: *'phrang sgrol skye shi 'ching sgrol rim gnyis bde chen gyi lam* (564.1).

(3) "bardo of meditative stabilization" (*ting-nge-'dzin bsam-gtan-gyi bar-do*)[167]

(4) "bardo of karmic latencies and dreams" (*bag-chags rmi-lam-gyi bar-do*)[168]

(5) "bardo of dying, in reverse order" (*lugs-zlog 'chi-ka'i bar-do*)[169]

(6) "bardo of becoming, in progressive order" (*lugs-'byung srid-pa'i bar-do*)[170]

The directional expressions "reverse" and "progressive" in the last two categories refer to a cosmological notion, common in Buddhist *anuttara-tantra*, of the micro-cosmic process of death and rebirth in which the psychophysical elements either disintegrate inwardly in reverse order (as in dying) or reintegrate progressively outward (as in gestation). These six bardo states are notably different from the six presented in Mi-la-ras-pa's song. There the categories represent variations on three basic themes that revolve around the transitional states of ordinary life, dreams, and death. Yang-dgon-pa on the other hand adds to these categories a meditation bardo (reminiscent of Mtshur-ston's "bardo of the path, practicing meditation") and makes a more refined distinction between the bardo states of life, death, and rebirth.

The fact that Yang-dgon-pa's list diverges so much from the *Mgur chu-gser-gyi phreng-ba* suggests that he probably relied on alternative interpretations prevalent among his contemporaries. We know, for instance, that he was born into a Rnying-ma-pa family of the Stong clan and studied with numerous teachers of various religious sects—such as Sangs-rgyas Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, from whom he received in 1223 Rdzogs-chen teachings and the *gter-ma* of Nyang-ral (1124-c.1192), and also Ko-brag-pa Bsod-nam-rgyal-

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[167]YGLG, vol. 2, fols. 587.5-594.5; cf. fol. 564.1-2: *'phrang sgrol gnyug ma lam du bcug pas bsam gtan gyi dug dbyung pa.*

[168]YGLG, vol. 2, fols. 594.5-600.2; cf. fol. 564.2: *'phrang sgrol nyid 'khrul rang grol ngo sprod gsum bsres.*

[169]YGLG, vol. 2, fols. 600.2-617.5; cf. fol. 564.2-3: *'phrang sgrol thim gsum thabs su khyer nas 'od gsal ma bu spyod pa.*

[170]YGLG, vol. 2, fols. 617.5-643.2, cf. fol. 564.3: *'phrang sgrol sgyu lus gnas 'pho 'khrul med ngos 'dzin mngal sgo bde chen du bgrod pa.*

mtshan (1181-1261), who bestowed upon him the "path and fruit" (*lam-'bras*) instructions of Jo-mo Lha-rje-ma, and presumably also her bardo transmissions.[171] Yang-dgon-pa's writings on bardo might then be viewed as a synthesis of diverse traditions. The Rnying-ma-pa connections are particularly intriguing.

As we shall soon see, the Rdzogs-chen scriptures of the Rnying-ma tradition frequently contain descriptions of bardo that are at least nominally similar to Yang-dgon-pa's sixfold ennumeration. This similarity is perhaps most readily apparent in the Rdzogs-chen styled *Thugs-rje chen-po bar-do mun-sel-gyi sgron-me'i gdams-pa* [*Mahākarūṇa, Instructions on the Lamp which Dispels the Darkness of the Bardo*] from the text cycle *Gab-pa mngon-byung(phyung)* [*Disclosure of the Hidden*] of the eclectic *Maṇi bka'-'bum* tradition.[172] This interesting work also presents a sixfold division of the bardo, which is almost identical to Yang-dgon-pa's arrangement although the meanings of the terms are quite distinct.[173] As we might expect the bardo exposition in this *Maṇi bka'-'bum* work is structured on a metaphysics tied to the deity Mahākarūṇika; this we do not find in the texts composed by Yang-dgon-pa. I tend to think, however, that both presentations are roughly contemporaneous and are representative of the state of bardo speculation then prevalent in Tibet.[174] This might mean that by the middle of the thirteenth century a sixfold structure of the intermediate-state may have become the preferred format among followers of the Rnying-ma-pa and Bka'-brgyud-pa lineages, although we cannot be certain as to what exactly the six states may have been at any given time. We can say without hesitation that four of the six bardos described in Yang-dgon-pa

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[171]On the life of Yang-dgon-pa, see LRCB, pp. 700-715; Roerich 1949, pp. 688-691.
[172]See GBNG; cf. also Kapstein 1992, pp. 90-91; Sorensen 1994, pp. 585-588.
[173]The six bardo states are described as follows: (1) *rang-bzhin gnas-pas bar-ma-do*, (2) *skye-shi'i bar-ma-do*, (3) *shes-pa snga-phyi'i bar-ma-do*, (4) *rmi-lam-gyi bar-ma-do*, (5) *'chi-kha'i bar-ma-do*, and (6) *srid-pa'i bar-ma-do*.
[174]Sorensen places the "recovery" of the *Gab-pa mngon-byung* in 1150-1160, despite the fact that the text is generally attributed to Śākya-bzang-po (Zur-Pakṣi Śākya-'od) who flourished in the thirteenth century.

and in varying terms in the *Gab-pa mngon-phyung* remained relatively stable throughout the next several centuries leading up to Karma-gling-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*—these being the "bardo of meditative stabilization", the "bardo of dreams", the "bardo of dying", and the "bardo of becoming". On the other hand the bardos of the "natural state" and of "birth-to-death" were somewhat indeterminate, each apparently interchangeable. Also during this period, the peculiar "bardo of reality-itself" (*chos-nyid bar-do*) so familiar in the Rdzogs-chen literature also began to appear in lists containing multiple bardo states, although we do not know precisely when this may have first occurred. It is to this intriguing topic that we must now turn our attention.

Rdzogs-chen Innovations and the Snying-thig Tradition

Beginning in 842 with the assassination of Emperor Glang-dar-ma (Khri Bdu-dum-brtsan, b.ca.803) Buddhism was officially stripped of its rank as the state religion in Tibet. This was the end of the period referred to in retrospect as the "former diffusion of the doctrine" (*bstan-pa snga-dar*). Buddhism, however, did not entirely disappear from the Tibetan religious arena. Despite the lack of state support the religion continued to survive, and even flourish, in areas outside the tumultuous and fractured region of central Tibet. In this somewhat loose environment, Buddhism was cultivated in a variety of forms and developed without centralized control. These diverse religious movements were largely diffused throughout the region by the efforts of wandering yogis and self-styled religious savants, many of whom claimed lineal descent from "authentic" Indian, Chinese, and Central Asian Buddhist masters. It was during this so-called "Dark Age" (842-c.978) that these religious groups, later known collectively as the Rnying-ma-pa and Bon-po, formulated new systems of thought and elaborated on some earlier traditions

established during the height of Tibet's dynastic period in the eighth and early ninth centuries.

In the subsequent renaissance era (c.978-1419) when new competing sects had begun to appear (the Gsar-ma-pa)—due in part to economic resurgence and the revival of an institutional-based Buddhism—both the Rnying-ma-pa and Bon-po were set apart and explicitly identified as distinct from these newer groups. Although their differences were largely described in terms of doctrinal divergence, the influence of political and economic factors should not be ignored. In particular, the independent kingdoms of western Tibet (e.g., Gu-ge) were in an exceptionally strong position to attract teachers from India and Kashmir and to encourage concentrated scholarly activity, which included the mass importation and translation of significant Indian Buddhist scriptures. These kingdoms were also quite capable of providing the support needed for building temples and monasteries. Many of the new traditions that developed in this environment rejected the validity of the religious systems that had previously flourished without institutional sponsorship. They argued that the texts of these older groups were not authentic and were simply pseudo-Buddhist fabrications. Consequently, those controversial scriptures were later excluded from the official Tibetan Buddhist Canon, but alternatively preserved by their enthusiasts in the seemingly flexible collection known as the *Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum* [*One Hundred Thousand Tantras of the Ancients*]. This group of *tantra-s* and associated exegetical materials was distinctive primarily in terms of the philosophical system upon which the majority of its teachings were founded, namely the religious doctrine known as Rdzogs-chen or Great Perfection. It is not necessary to explore in this chapter the long and complicated history of this unique system in Tibet, since scholars such as Samten Karmay, Franz-Karl Ehrhard, and David Germano have discussed the

development in some detail.[175] Instead, I will describe briefly the conceptual framework of the Rdzogs-chen perspective in an effort to contextualize the bardo elaborations specific to the Rnying-ma-pa and Bon-po traditions. Here emphasis will be on an entirely unique intermediate-state concept called "bardo of reality-itself" (*chos-nyid bar-do*) derived essentially from the combination of certain Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig [Seminal Heart] ideas with a mandala of one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-khro rigs-brgya*) borrowed from the Mahāyoga (*rnal-'byor chen-po*) tradition. In the end we should be well-situated to begin investigating the content and history of Karma-gling-pa's Rdzogs-chen-derived text cycles *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*.

We encounter some of the important tantric innovations that may have developed prior to but almost certainly during Tibet's "Dark Age" in the pivotal *Kun-byed rgyal-po* [*All-Creating King*], the fundamental text of Rdzogs-chen alleged to have been translated from Sanskrit and redacted by the Indian scholar Srī Siṃha (Dpal-gyi-seng-ge) and the monk Vairocana sometime in the eighth century.[176] The text's origins, however, are not entirely clear; an ambiguity that sparked a long history of controversy in Tibet.[177] We do know at least that the work was extant by the early eleventh century, not long after the emergence of the Tibetan Buddhist renaissance and the development of sectarian groups. It was also during this period that the Snying-thig tradition of Rdzogs-chen was taking shape.[178]

The doctrinal position formulated in the *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, and embellished also by the emerging Snying-thig system, offered a complete cosmogony centered around the

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[175]See especially Karmay 1988a; Ehrhard 1990; Germano 1994, nd(a), nd(b).
[176]See NGB (Mtshams-brag), vol. 1, fols. 2-262; cf. also Dargyay 1985 and 1992; Reynolds 1996, pp. 236-248; Karmay 1998, pp. 69-75.
[177]See Karmay 1998, pp. 71-73.
[178]Germano 1994, p. 272.

concept of a "Primordial Ground" (*gdod-ma'i gzhi*) as the fundamental basis that underlies the universe and that activates its varied manifestations. In this view, the Ground is "pure source potential" (*'char-gzhi*), a dynamic and unified openness from which arises all that will exist. Utterly devoid of categorical distinctions, the Ground is "original purity" (*ka-dag*), and its intrinsic dynamism or "spontaneous presence" (*lhun-grub*) serves as the source potential of all that comes to exist. In addition, the Ground's potentiality, its openness, is imbued with "primordial intelligence" (*ye-shes*). It is described in terms of a triunal identity—essence (*ngo-bo*), nature (*rang-bzhin*), and compassion (*thugs-rje*). This three-fold scheme is correlated to the traditional Three-Body principle—the Dharmakāya (*chos-sku*) whose essence is empty, the Saṃbhogakāya (*longs-sku*) whose nature is radiant luminosity, and the Nirmāṇakāya (*sprul-sku*) which is manifest and compassionately active in the world. The cosmos in its primordial condition is thus shown to be always already harmonious with the thoroughly awakened embodiment of buddhahood. The subject of Rdzogs-chen cosmogony and developments of the Snying-thig system has been explored in some detail by David Germano in a series of studies which have not yet been made available in print. The following description of the Rdzogs-chen worldview is based fundamentally on these unpublished works.[179]

The triune identity of the Ground remains in its primordial dimension as a self-contained and interiorized potentiality, and as such it is understood metaphorically as a "youthful body in a vase" (*gzhon-nu bum-pa sku*). In this image, "body" refers to the Ground's dynamic luminosity, its spontaneous presence as yet unrealized. Freshly vibrant and free from the corruptions of exteriorized actuality, this body of pure potentiality, brimming with the vigor of youth, is concealed from view, encased within its own

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[179]The typescripts consulted are entitled *Mysticism and Rhetoric in the Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)* [nd(a)] and *The Secret Tibetan History of Buddhist Tantra in the Great Perfection* [nd(b)]. I am indebted to David Germano for providing copies of these manuscripts and for many fruitful conversations on the subject of Rdzogs-chen over the past several years.

original purity. At some obscure point and for reasons unknown the encasing seal of this "vase" is opened up by a stirring of a primordial gnostic wind (*ye-shes-kyi rlung*). The energy of this wind causes awareness (*rig-pa*) to be elevated from the Ground and a cosmos begins to spiral outward from the singular interiority of the Ground's pure potential. This cosmos, consisting of numerous galaxies of manifest luminosity, emerges in a hierarchically arranged triunal pattern described as the exteriorization of the forms of awakened energy, the Ground's "self-presencing" (*rang-snang*). The Dharmakāya manifests above like a cloudless sky, while directly in front the Saṃbhogakāya pure lands pervade the sky's vast expanse. Just below them are the manifestations of the Nirmāṇakāya and further down, the sixfold world system (*rigs-drug*). This unfolding process—the Ground's transition from internal radiance (*nang-gsal*) to external radiance (*phyir-gsal*)—opens up at least two paths: a pure gateway leading to enlightenment (*nirvāṇa*) and an impure gateway leading into cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*). At this point, the potential trajectory of the evolutionary process is entirely dependent upon the capacity for self-awareness deriving from the Ground's compassionate energy (*thugs-rje*).

In the crucial moment of the Ground's spontaneous exteriorization, that which manifests is instantly confronted by a panoramic spiraling of five different rainbow colored lights; its capacity for awareness, emerging from the playful shining forth of the Ground, provides an opportunity for recognition of these lights as its own self-presencing, i.e., awakening to its own enlightened reality (*rig-pa*). But if the lights are not recognized as such, there is non-awareness (*ma-rig-pa*) and "straying" (*'khrul-pa*) into dualistic conditioned reality. The first being to recognize himself and the five colored lights is Adibuddha or Kun-tu-bzang-po [All Good], the very instant of primordial enlightenment personified. In this first moment of recognition, the empty essence is expansively (*rgyas*) awakened (*sangs*) within the Ground into a Buddha's (*sangs-rgyas*)

manifest enlightenment. Kun-tu-bzang-po's instantaneous realization climaxes into full self-awareness, stimulating a reversal of the evolutionary process in eight phases, each corresponding to the individual modes of the Ground's initial manifestation. In this process of cosmic dissolution, a return to the Ground's pure source potential, the Ground retains its self-awareness and a Buddha is actualized. In the *Kun-byed rgyal-po*, as indicated by its title, this Buddha is described as the "creator" (*byed-pa-po*) of the universe, the "king who creates everything" (*kun-byed rgyal-po*).[180]

The first moment of non-recognition on the other hand triggers a movement into cyclic existence. At that instant, when failing to recognize its own nature it strays (*'khrul-pa*) into dualistic experience, distinct subjects and objects are apprehended. From within this dualistic experience of otherness, the five afflictive emotions (ignorance, desire, hatred, pride, and jealousy) arise in their latent form and awareness grasps at the five corresponding sensual objects (visible forms, sounds, scents, tastes, and mental phenomena). An individual sentient being materializes just at the moment the Ground's initial radiance is obscured by this emergent distorted subjectivity. The Ground's luminosity, previously manifesting as the five rainbow colored lights, now begins to congeal into solidified objective matter, resulting in the emergence of the five material elements that constitute the physical universe (earth, water, fire, wind, and space). With the psychophysical components of distorted existence now in place, the impure gateway leading to birth is rent asunder and the gradual process of corporeal and neurotic development is set in motion. At this point the voluted descent into one of six possible realms of existence cannot be avoided.

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[180]Karmay 1998, p. 74. Karmay goes on to note that this emphasis on a divine creator "brings immediately to mind the *prakṛti* of the philosophy of Sāmkhya...It is because of the penetration of the theory of the 'five lights of the luminous mind' into the *Kun byed* and its similarity to the concept of *prakṛti* of the Sāmkhya as 'creator' that the orthodox critics have had no hesitation in calling rDzogs chen heretical".

From this characteristically Rdzogs-chen perspective, birth and death are understood as being analogous to the cosmological drama. In this way, the ordinary dying and rebirth process is described explicitly in terms of the ebb and flow of the cosmos itself. The Primordial Ground's exteriorization and its capacity for self-recognition are repeated at the samsaric level of straying during the transitional event (*bar-do*) of a sentient being's death, when the coarse psychophysical components begin to dissolve back into the Ground's originally pure radiance. As in the cosmogonic process outlined above, failure to recognize the pure luminosity of reality-itself (*chos-nyid 'od-gsal*) sparks the impure movement into a new material existence, while recognition leads into the expansively awakened condition of Kun-tu-bzang-po, the primordial Buddha. We see then that the dying process is directly correlated to the involutive process of the manifest cosmos' return to its primordial condition of original purity. The capacity for self-recognition at this moment proves crucial to one's release from the cycle of conditioned existence and the attainment of buddhahood.

If there is no awareness then there is rebirth in samsara. Implicit in this view is the idea that samsara and its suffering is a function of the epistemological dualism—the bifurcation of consciousness into subject and object—out of which the world of a sentient being's experience is constructed. Rdzogs-chen soteriology, therefore, entails the recovery of a primordial state of realization (*ye-shes*) before such bifurcation takes place. Because the process by which suffering comes about is predicated on an awareness that is obscured (*ma-rig-pa*), it is possible to reverse (*zlog-pa*) the process by successively dispelling the darkness (*mun-sel*), so to speak, and experiencing the awareness (*rig-pa*) that is always already awakened to the intrinsic purity of reality (*chos-nyid*), thereby freeing oneself from the bondage of conditioned existence. Freedom (*grol-ba*) can be achieved in this life in dependence upon specific Rdzogs-chen techniques, e.g., the

practices of "breakthrough" (*khregs-chod*) and "direct transcendence" (*thod-rgal*), or it may be realized during the experiences of dying and postmortem transition (*bar-do*), when the entire de-evolutive cosmic cycle is repeated naturally. It is this particular model of death and bardo that is expounded most distinctively in the Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig texts of the *Rnying-ma'i rgyud bcu-bdun* [*Seventeen Tantras of the Ancients*] revealed in India to the mystic Dga'-rab-rdo-rje, who is believed to be the first human teacher of Rdzogs-chen.[181] The fact that an identical pattern is reflected in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* cycle, and especially in the texts that comprise the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*, indicates clearly that this later cycle was operating from within the cosmological framework established earlier in the scriptures comprising the Snying-thig corpus.

The *Rgyud bcu-bdun* is the canonical core of the Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig tradition and is usually included in the larger Rnying-ma-pa anthology of ancient *tantra-s* called *Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*. According to tradition, the seventeen interrelated Snying-thig scriptures are accepted as divine revelation received by Dga'-rab-rdo-rje.[182] The *Rgyud bcu-bdun* nevertheless betrays signs of being compiled over a long period of time by multiple hands. The precise identity of these unknown redactors is a riddle that we hope may soon be solved. Whatever the case we must accept that the collection in the form it is known to us today is comprised of several layers of history reflecting diverse influences. Recently, Germano has argued that the texts of the *Rgyud bcu-bdun* "were almost certainly Tibetan compositions originating in the eleventh century".[183] Recall that this was also the era of the great Gsar-ma siddhas Nāropa, Mar-pa, and so forth. With paradigmatic texts such as those found in the *Rnying-ma'i rgyud bcu-bdun* and the *Kun-byed rgyal-po* it is clear that tantric innovation was not exclusive to those Gsar-ma-pa

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[181]See Germano nd(b), esp. pp. 22-48.
[182]On the life of Dga'-rab-rdo-rje, see particularly GKCB, pp. 111-117; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 490-494; Reynolds 1996, pp. 177-189.
[183]Germano nd(b), p. 20-21.

yogis. Reformulations of the earlier Indian *antarābhava* theory were expounded also by followers of the Rnying-ma-pa (and Bon-po) lineages. Like the *gdams-ngag* traditions of the Bka'-brgyud siddhas, the Rnying-ma-pa developed systems of multiple bardo states. Many examples can be cited from the the large tantric anthology *Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum* where we find traditions of speaking of one, three, four, five, and even six separate intermediate phases.[184] But it is with the *Rgyud bcu-bdun* that we encounter perhaps the first systematic presentation of a distinctively Rdzogs-chen reformulation of the bardo concept that had emerged in Tibet after the mysterious Dark Ages. Of course, I do not intend to argue that earlier Rnying-ma bardo expositions cannot be identified—examples that immediately come to mind are possibly the *Rin-po-che srid-pa bar-do rang-snang-ba'i rgyud* [*Precious Tantra of the Natural Visions of the Bardo of Becoming*][185] or the *Rdzogs-pa chen-po bar-do gsang-ba'i rgyud* [*Tantra of the Secret Great Perfection Bardo*].[186] What I mean to say is simply that the *tantra-s* of the *Rgyud bcu-bdun* contain the clearest presentation of a completely integrated bardo system in accord with emergent fundamental Rdzogs-chen theories.

Among these seventeen texts, the most significant in terms of bardo speculation is undoubtedly the *Nyi-ma dang zla-ba kha-sbyor-ba chen-po gsang-ba'i rgyud* [*Tantra of the Secret Union of Sun and Moon*].[187] The basic plot of this *tantra* is structured around a dialogue between the deity Vajradhāra (Rdo-rje-chang) and a Bodhisattva named Mi-

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[184]The relevant works are too numerous to mention, but we can provide a list of some standard divisions. Three-fold bardo: (i) *rang-bzhin bar-do*, (ii) *rmi-lam bar-do*, (iii) *srid-pa bar-do*. Four-fold bardo: (i) *rang-bzhin bar-do*, (ii) *ting-nge-'dzin-gyi bar-do*, (iii) *chos-nyid bar-do*, (iv) *srid-pa'i bar-do*. Five-fold bardo: (i) *rang-bzhin bar-do*, (ii) *ting-nge-'dzin-gyi bar-do*, (iii) *rmi-lam bar-do*, (iv) *skye-shi bar-do*, (v) *srid-pa'i bar-do*. Six-fold bardo: (i) *rang-bzhin bar-do*, (ii) *ting-nge-'dzin-gyi bar-do*, (iii) *rmi-lam bar-do*, (iv) *skye-shi bar-do*, (v) *chos-nyid bar-do*, (vi) *srid-pa'i bar-do*.

[185]Alternative title, *Rdo-rje sems-dpa'i rgyud*. In NGB (Mtshams-brag), vol.4, fols. 609-632.6; NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.4, fols.416-434; VGB, vol.3, fols.387-411 (listed as *Rin-po-che srid-pa bar-ma-do snang-ba'i rgyud*).

[186]In NGB (Mtshams-brag), vol.4, fols.526.5-531.6; VGB, vol.4, fols.68.3-72.4.

[187]In NGB (Mtshams-brag), vol.12, fols. 491-559; NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols.386-435. Chapters 3 and 4 have been translated in Orofino 1990, pp. 31-59.

rtog-thub-pa, who asks a series of questions concerning the methods sentient beings may employ to achieve liberation. Vajradhāra responds by describing systematically the experiences an individual undergoes during the various transitional periods, and in due course teaches Mi-rtog-thub-pa how to resolve the oral instructions of his teacher. Four bardo states are ennumerated:

(1) "bardo of the natural state" (*rang-bzhin gnas-pa'i bar-do*)[188]
(2) "bardo of dying" (*'chi-kha-ma'i bar-ma-do*)[189]
(3) "bardo of reality-itself" (*chos-nyid bar-do*)[190]
(4) "bardo of becoming" (*srid-pa bar-do*)[191]

The subtext is pragmatic. Release (*grol-ba*) can be achieved during these four periods of transition by making the proper offerings, following the necessary meditative instructions, and recognizing the truth taught by former masters. It is the text's meta-narrative that suggests the *Nyi-zla kha-sbyor* may have been more than just a written document of the bardo journey. The text offers a varied program for an array of performance styles, involving death prognostication (*'chi-brtags*),[192] ritual exorcism (*'chi-ba blu-ba'i cho-ga*),[193] and life-sādhana (*tshe-thabs*).[194] It would appear then that a fluid relationship existed between the narrative of the text and, for lack of a better term, its liturgy. Just as we shall see more explicitly in the case of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, the *Nyi-zla kha-sbyor* integrated components of both doctrine and ritual to operate almost as a complete liturgical system designed to insure an auspicious destiny for both the living and the dead. That being said, however, the text does not offer a ritual directive that could be viewed as

[188]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 394.6-416.1.
[189]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 416.1-425.5.
[190]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 425.5-431.6.
[191]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 431.6-435.1.
[192]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 417-419.
[193]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 419-420.
[194]NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 423-424.

comprehensive, as for example we find in the later *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. The codification of fully structured Rdzogs-chen death liturgies among the Rnying-ma-pa did not occur before the fourteenth century, although such rites were certainly based on much earlier models; the *Nyi-zla kha-sbyor* is a case in point.

In this context the distinctive innovation of the Snying-thig was the development of a unique bardo concept that combined the Rdzogs-chen theory of the process of cosmic emanation and dissolution—a dynamic also operative at the microcosmic level of the human being—with the notion of transitional phases between various states of consciousness. Evidently this new bardo concept called "bardo of reality-itself" (*chos-nyid bar-do*) was the result of elaborations and embellishments of the earlier and more wide-ranging tantric concept of "luminosity" or "clear light" (*'od-gsal*) said to be experienced briefly by all human beings at the moment of death, by advanced yogic practitioners in the highest levels of the completion phase meditation, and unceasingly by all buddhas.[195] Interestingly, this very subtle radiance is believed also to be experienced, though rarely noticed, in more mundane moments such as fainting, sneezing, and orgasm, as well as in the first instant before and after dreaming. The sleep experience had already been incorporated earlier into the expanding bardo doctrine, e.g., Nāropa's "bardo of dreams" (*rmi-lam bar-do*). In the *Nyi-zla kha-sbyor*, and other Snying-thig scriptures, the brief moment of the clear light encounter was extended so that it came to span an entirely new conceptual space. This amplified experience of luminosity was described in terms of

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[195] In this regard, we should note a curious passage in Zhang Rin-po-che's *Na-ro-pa'i bar-do'i gdam-ngag la bar-do rnam-pa-gsum* (NPBD, fol. 184v.4): "again and again you should recall the meaning of reality-itself which is without origin" (*chos nyid skye ba med pa'i don de dran par gyis shig ces yang dang yang du bya'o*). I think Martin is correct in suggesting that this might indicate some notion of the "recognition of reality" in the bardo, but what precisely this means in the context of the history of a "reality bardo" has not been decided. It strikes me that the latter concept had already been formulated in Rnying-ma-pa literature long before Zhang Rin-po-che's syncretic exposition of Nāropa's Six Doctrines. I am grateful to Dan Martin for kindly providing me with his notes on this bardo work.

a separate transitional period distinct from the other bardo states commonly expounded in the Bka'-brgyud *gdams-ngag* traditions.

With the Rdzogs-chen "bardo of reality-itself" the emphasis was on the clear light as the Primordial Ground's original pure radiance. The ensuing postmortem drama mirrored the cosmogonic process of the Ground's exteriorization and of Kun-tu-bzang-po's initial enlightenment. The capacity for self-recognition at this moment determined the direction and path of the deceased's future destiny. Awareness (*rig-pa*) was said to lead immediately to buddhahood, whearas non-awareness (*ma-rig-pa*) sparked the next sequential bardo phase, the "bardo of becoming" (*srid-pa bar-do*), culminating in rebirth as a sentient being in one of the six realms of existence. The decidedly Rdzogs-chen flavor of this interpretation allows us to see just how distinctive the Rnying-ma theory of bardo was in contrast to the ideas expounded by the Gsar-ma-pa traditions. It would appear that these competing models were ongoing topics of controversy as witnessed here in a brief statement by 'Jigs-med-gling-pa (1730-1798):

> "Especially with regard to the bardos of reality and becoming, there is some incompatibility here [in Tibet] between the discussions in Old and New Secret Mantra [traditions]. As a result, there appears all manner of explications, establishing one's own tradition as proper, critiquing the other side as being unsuitable, and so forth."[196]

One of the most prominent features of the "reality bardo" which sets it apart from all other intermediate-states of both the "old" and "new" traditions is the doctrine of peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-khro*). In its earliest conceptual form the idea of spontaneous visions

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[196]Translation in Gyatso 1998, p. 19-20. I find it interesting that 'Jig-med-gling-pa relies on a passage in one of Yang-dgon-pa's *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol* texts to support his ecumenical resolution to this particular dispute.

of peaceful and wrathful deities during the bardo of reality-itself cannot be traced, although there is ample textual evidence of the inclusion in this context of the appearance of five buddhas or teachers (*ston-pa lnga*) familiar from standard Mahāyāna exegesis.[197] Consider for example the following passage from the reality bardo section of the *Nyi-zla kha-'byor*:

> "Again, these visions [of light] self-manifest as pure bodies. These bodies are neither large nor small, but well-proportioned with ornaments, colors, postures, thrones, and gestures. These pure bodies are present as five forms, each one encircled by light. They possess the implements of father and mother, male and female bodhisattvas. All [five] mandalas are present as complete in one whole."[198]

At this stage, it is not altogether clear when precisely a mandala of one hundred or more peaceful and wrathful deites was first assimilated into the model above. The topic has been the subject of a few preliminary investigations by Henk Blezer, but his findings so far have not been conclusive.[199] Whatever the actual historical details it is certain that by the fourteenth century this specific set of deities from the Mahāyoga tradition had been inserted into the doctrine of the reality bardo, and once incorporated became a quintessential feature of that concept.

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[197] These are usually (1) Vairocana, (2) Akṣobhya, (3) Ratnasambhava, (4) Amitābha, and (5) Amoghasiddha.

[198] NGB, fol. 222: *yang snang ba de dag sku'i rnam par rang shar te / sku de dag kyang mi che ba / mi chung ba / cha mnyam pa / rgyan dang / kha dog dang / bzhugs tshul dang / gdan khri dang / phyag rgya dang bcas te / sku de dag kyang lnga lnga'i gzugs kyis khyab pa / lnga tshan re re la 'od kyi mu khyud dang bcas pa / yab kyi cha 'dzin pa'i rigs dang / yum gyi cha 'dzin pa'i rigs dang / sems dpa' dang / sems ma dang / dkyil 'khor thams cad gcig la rdzogs par gnas so*. See also Orofino 1990, p. 46.

[199] Blezer 1997 and 1998. In my opinion, Blezer's comments in this regard are weakened both by his choice of source material—the bulk of which postdates the fourteenth century—and by an inadequate examination of the conceptual background of the sources in question, i.e., Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig.

The *Zhi-khro* system appears to have been derived originally from teachings found in the eighth-century text cycle *Māyājāla* (*Sgyu-'phrul drwa-ba*) [*Web of Magical Transformation*], and specifically its central scripture the *Guhyagarbha-mahātantra* (*Gsang-ba'i snying-po*) [*Great Tantra of the Secret Nucleus*].[200] This *tantra* is representative of the first of three distinctively Rnying-ma-pa textual classifications of the so-called "inner *tantra-s*" (*nang-rgyud*)—Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga or Rdzogs-chen. The Mahāyoga *tantra-s* were translated most likely from Indian originals in the eighth to ninth century by both Indian and Tibetan scholars, and thus comprise certain doctrines and practices prevalent in India during that time. The soteriological thrust of these texts is centered on particular generation-phase tantric techniques, e.g., deity yoga, designed to bring about a union with what is called the "non-dual superior truth" (*lhag-pa'i gnyis-med bden-pa*). According to Gyurme Dorje, among the eighty-two chapters of the long recension of the text, the first twenty-eight concern the emergence of the peaceful deities, while the remaining fifty-four detail the wrathful mandala.[201] This set of deities represents a uniquely Mahāyoga interpretation of the standard set of five buddha families (*rigs-lnga*) common to all tantric Buddhist systems. Essentially, these five buddhas are viewed as the enlightened emanations of the corresponding five-fold set of "primordial wisdom" (*ye-shes*) and of both cosmological and psychological relationships which are all brought together in the five psychophysical components of a sentient being. The *Guhyagarbha* amplifies and inflates the basic five-fold set of buddhas into the array of peaceful and wrathful deities, and maps out in meticulous detail all their intricacies. The

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[200]A Tibetan translation of the *Guhyagarbha-mahātantra* is found in NGB (Mtsham-brag), vol. 14, no. 3, fols. 152-218. Edited and translated in Dorje 1987.A Sanskrit edition is not extant. Blezer concludes that although the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was likely derived from the *Guhyagarbha*-cycle, its mandala was not identical, which suggests some development had taken place (Blezer 1997, pp.128-129). "Intermediate stages can be reconstructed from the several *maṇḍala-s* present in *Na rag doṅ sprug(s)*-texts and related literature. It does seem likely that the closest relative, read: anceştor, of the *kar gling źi khro*, was probably similar to a *maṇḍala* as it is still extant in, for instance, the *Źi khro sgyu 'phrul*, and was at some time adapted from one of this class of confession- and purification-texts and inserted into the *Chos ñid bar do'i gsal 'debs*."

[201]Dorje 1987, pp. 50-56.

text is structured around an elaborate exegesis of the involved processes of consecration, emanation, and absorption of this divine entourage. With some notable variation the *Guhyagarbha* mandala is essentially the same mandala that would be later sanctified in the *gter-ma* of O-rgyan-gling-pa (1323-c.1360),[202] Karma-gling-pa,[203] Shes-rab-'od-zer (b.1518),[204] and 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po (1585-1656).[205]

The assimilation of elements of the Mahāyoga system (along with several other tantric features of the *anuttara-yoga* and *mahāmudra*) into the full spectrum of Rdzogs-chen—a conceptual system that by the early ninth century had achieved the status of a single autonomous "vehicle" (*yāna*, *theg-pa*)[206]—resulted in the expansion of this latter tradition to include an entirely new series of complex innovations best encapsulated in the Snying-thig movement of the late tenth and eleventh centuries:

> "Traditionally, the Seminal Heart [Snying-thig] is said to have been the exceedingly secret core of the Great Perfection [Rdzogs-chen], and as such was only transmitted to literally a handful of people during the late eighth and ninth centuries as Buddhism took hold in dynastic period Tibet. This new Great Perfection movement was then introduced to the wider Tibetan public from the eleventh century onwards under the auspices of "recovered" texts called "treasures" (*gter ma*), which included both transcendental buddha-authored tantras and their human-composed exegetical literature. In terms of the former, there were a series of new tantras in the classic format said to be dynastic period translations by either Vimalamitra or Vairocana in conjunction with Srisiṃha,

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[202]See O-rgyan-gling-pa, *Zhi-khro bka'-'dus*. RCTD, vol. 23.
[203]See Karma-gling-pa, *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.
[204]See Shes-rab-'od-zer, *Grol-thig zhi-khro*. RCTD, vols. 4 and 11.
[205]See ZKND. For a detailed comparison of the *zhi-khro* of the *Guhyagarbha*, Karma-gling-pa, and 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po, see Blezer 1997.
[206]Germano 1994, p. 218.

> from which a set of seventeen was gradually codified under the rubric of *rGyud bcu bdun* (*The Seventeen Tantras*). In addition, there emerged a body of exegetical literature attributed to six Indian figures...and eventually collected into a set known as *Bi ma snying thig* (*The Seminal Heart of Vimalamitra*), the name pointing to the supposed eighth century Indian redactor who is said to have brought the texts to Tibet and redacted them there as a collection. These texts' origination and transmission were both attributed to the shadowy non-Tibetan figures said to play the key roles in the Great Perfection's emergence in this world system and initial very limited circulation (prior to its unprecendented expansion in Tibet)—Surativajra, Mañjuśrimitra, Srisiṃha, Jñānasūtra and Vimalamitra."[207]

The details of the early transmission of this literature through the efforts of Vimalamitra, Vairocana, and so forth does not concern us here. Rather we should take note that the Snying-thig transmissions were systematically codified in the fourteenth century by the religious savant Klong-chen-rab-'byams-pa (1308-1363). His influential writings on Snying-thig represented "its first systematic exposition attributed explicitly to an indigenous Tibetan author. Not only did he put this tradition in its classical form, he also managed to integrate its doctrines and practices into the increasingly normative modernist [Gsar-ma-pa] discourses that had taken shape from the contemporary Indian Buddhist logico-epistemological circles, Madhyamaka, Yogācāra, and tantric traditions of the late tenth to thirteenth centuries".[208] Klong-chen-pa's exposition of the complete system of the Snying-thig, contained principally in the voluminous *Snying-thig ya-bzhi* [*Four Branches of the Seminal Heart*] and in his own *Mdzod-bdun* [*Seven Treasuries*], has practically become "canonical" in its importance and influence among the Rnying-ma-pa. In

[207]Germano 1994, p. 269.
[208]Germano 1994, p. 274.

particular, his various interpretations of the bardo doctrine unique to this tradition (cf. chapter ten of his *Tshig-don mdzod, Treasury of Words and Meanings*) have served collectively as an authoritative standard and one of the main sources upon which most subsequent commentary on the subject has been based.[209]

This having been said we should point out that Klong-chen-pa's work is never referred to explicitly by the authors and redactors of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, even though this characteristically Snying-thig text cycle was unmistakably influenced by Klong-chen-pa's prior efforts in systematizing the Rdzogs-chen tradition. There must be some reason for this lack of reference. Perhaps Klong-chen-pa's writings were not well known before their "rediscovery" in the eighteenth century by 'Jigs-med-gling-pa.[210] Or possibly the reason could be that since the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* represents a revealed "treasure" believed to be the textual embodiment of the sacred words of Padmasambhava, all intertextual references must then be to other divinely-authored scriptures such as those included in the *Rnying-ma'i rgyud bcu-bdun*. Indeed, the *Nyi-zla kha-'byor* and other works of that collection are quoted extensively and almost exclusively in, for example, the Kar-gling *Bar-do-drug-gi khrid-yig* [*Guidebook to the Six Intermediate States*] written by Karma-gling-pa's grand-disciple, Nyi-zla-'od-zer (b.1409/21).[211]

The distinctive Snying-thig tradition that originated with Klong-chen-pa—referred to in Guru Bkra-shis as the *Klong-chen snying-thig*, which should not be confused with the identically named and more familiar eighteenth-century tradition of 'Jigs-med-gling-pa—passed in two lineal streams through a number of important Tibetan teachers including

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[209]See Germano 1997.
[210]On whom, see especially GKCB, fols. 635-644; Thondup 1996; Gyatso 1998.
[211]T7, vol. 2, *passim.*, ff. 303-432. Recently translated in Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 83-273.

Klong-chen-pa's own son, Sprul-sku Grags-pa-'od-zer (b.1356).[212] Not suprisingly, both lineages included figures that also played prominent and active roles in the transmission of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* teachings, providing yet another clue of that cycle's doctrinal orientation. One lineage was received through 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs, disciple and son of Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje.[213] This transmission eventually reached Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-dbang-po (1550-1625) and Ngag-dbang-ye-shes-grub-pa. The former became the teacher of Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1608-1680), while the latter acted as mentor to Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol (1604-1669), the Fifth Dalai Lama's (1617-1682) principal Rnying-ma tutor. A second transmission, which passed directly through Grags-pa-'od-zer, was received by Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang-po (alias Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba, 1497-1568).[214] It was this transmission that reached Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1494-1570), founder of the monastery of Dar-rgyas-chos-sding [-gling], the ancestral seat of O-rgyan Smin-grol-gling and the principal center of Rdzogs-chen activity in central and southern Tibet during the mid-sixteenth to late seventeenth centuries. The successors of Sna-tshogs-rang-grol's tradition included the Gsung-sprul incarnations of Padma-gling-pa (1450-1521), situated at Lha-lung monastery in Lho-brag, and the patrilineage of the great Gter-bdag-gling-pa (1646-1714). The history of these various lines of transmission is the subject of Chapter 4. All of these individuals were not only the principal curators of Klong-chen-pa's Snying-thig tradition, they were also directly responsible for maintaining and distributing the Snying-thig-styled teachings of Karma-gling-pa, particularly those that comprised the famous *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*.

In concluding this broad discussion of the history of Tibetan ideas and practices surrounding death and the dead, let me summarize my view of the general direction the

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[212]On the transmission of the *Klong-chen snying-thig*, see GKCB, pp. 214-240.
[213]GKCB, p. 225.
[214]GKCB, pp. 238-239.

postmortem intermediate-state doctrine took after its standard formulation in the literature of the Sarvāstivāda, with special reference to its succeeding history in Tibet. By the fifth century the Abhidharma descriptions of the intermediate-state had solidified following a standardized model first established in the representative works (e.g., *Mahāvibhāṣā* and Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*). The Buddhist siddha cults of the eighth and ninth century first adopted this orthodox theory in the context of a distinctively Tantric soteriology and expanded the term's meaning to include a plurality of intermediate-state phases. This multi-stratified tantric model—derived initially from aspects of the Abhidharma doctrine of the "four *bhava-s*" and the conflation of the original *antarābhava* idea with the *tri-kāya* principle—inspired further innovations when introduced into Tibet. The development of exclusively tantric conceptions of the *antarābhava* on Tibetan soil, galvanized by the ancient ritual and cosmological beliefs of the pre-Buddhist tradition, culminated in the eleventh century with the codification of various siddha transmissions—some of which came to be known collectively as the "Six Doctrines of Nāropa". Eventually, traditions arose that spoke of not only three, but four, five, and even six separate intermediate-states.

Simultaneously, we find evidence of an alternative development of the intermediate-state doctrine among certain older Tibetan Buddhist lineages with possible Central Asian roots; namely, those of the Rnying-ma-pa (and Bon-po). By the thirteenth century, an entirely unique intermediate-state, the "bardo of reality itself" (*chos-nyid bar-do*), had emerged from within these traditions that combined the contemplative and cosmogonic models of the Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig tradition with a mandala of one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities borrowed from the Mahāyoga *tantra-s* and associated particularly with the *Guhyagarbha-mahātantra*.

Between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the earlier conceptual innovations of the various lineages began to be systematized into complete liturgical programs designed for the most part to guide the deceased through the perils of the bardo. In these rituals we find a layering of old and new conceptions. We see in them not only a creative reinvention of the original Indo-Buddhist *antarābhava* and the assimilation of the popular Tibetan notion of perilous passage (*'phrang-lam*), but also the preservation of the ritual beliefs of the ancient indigenous tradition. In the following centuries, most of the subsequent doctrinal and liturgical contributions were more or less derivative of these previous developments, which by the late fifteenth century had already achieved in Tibet a certain standardized authority. It was in that period that the funeral liturgies of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* were first instituted. Soon thereafter this became the most complete and widely distributed form of the bardo ritual within Tibet and surrounding areas. The popularity of this tradition was surely a consequence of the success of the rituals in giving a balanced and compelling expression to many of the cultural attitudes toward death and dying which had for centuries flowed throughout the Tibetan region. A general overview of this ritual program for the dead and dying is provided below in our concluding section.

4. FROM DEATH TO BURIAL

The rituals of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, and particularly of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, are built around a coherent set of actions and a fully developed ritual sequence which recognize the value of confession and reconciliation in the purification of sins and the efficacy of prayer and ritual performance for guiding the deceased through the perilous pathways of the bardo and into the next life. In the brief discussion that follows, we will examine the general structure of the Tibetan bardo liturgy, relying on both textual and

ethnographic data.[215] The textual material will be drawn from the Kar-gling literature itself, while the ethnographic details will be based primarily on important anthropological research of several scholars, particularly Martin Brauen, Per Kvaerne, Charles Ramble, and Stan Mumford, as well as information gleaned from the brief *Bod-mi'i 'das-mchod* [*Tibetant Ceremonies for the Dead*], a modern Tibetan pamphlet by Thupten Sangay.[216] Although there are variations in each of these sources, certain features can be found in common. These shared elements will provide the basis for our account of the generalized pattern of the bardo rites.

In matters of burial practice, Tibetans have traditionally disposed of their dead in one of five ways: interment or earth burial (*sa-sbas gtong-ba*), cremation (*ro-sreg*), water burial (*chu-bskyur*), mummification, and vulture disposal (*bya-rgod 'don*).[217] As previously noted, the practice of burying the corpse in the earth was the prevalent custom of the early Tibetan kings before the court-sanctioned arrival of Buddhism. Burial rites during this ancient period consisted largely of offerings of food and various objects such as clothes, jewelry, and so forth, as well as the blood sacrifice of animals. The remains of the Tibetan kings were buried in large funerary mounds.[218] In modern times, interment is reserved exclusively for those who have died as a result of certain epidemic diseases, such as small-pox (*'brum-nad*), leprosy (*mdze-nad*), or tuberculosis (*glo-nad*).[219] Wylie has suggested that the custom of burning the corpse, or cremation, emerged as a popular alternative to burial sometime after the eleventh century, especially among populations where wood for such fires was easily available[220] (as in the densely forested provinces of

[215]Much of the material that follows appeared earlier in my M.A. thesis entitled *Death and Transition: The Dynamics of Liminal Space in Tibetan Ceremonies of the Dead* (1993).
[216]Brauen 1978a and 1982; Brauen and Kvaerne 1978c; Kvaerne 1985 and 1997a; Ramble 1982; Mumford 1989; THUP (translation in Sangay 1984).
[217]Wylie 1964a, p. 232.
[218]Tucci 1950; Haarh 1969, pp. 327-397.
[219]Wylie 1964a, p. 234.
[220]Wylie 1964a, p. 232.

southeastern Tibet, in Dwags-po, Kong-po, etc.). As to why cremation became a widely favored method in Tibet, the historical record offers few clues. Whatever the reason, it seems that nowadays cremation is practiced widely among the Tibetan refugee communities primarily in keeping with the customs of India.[221] Disposal in water appears to have been a method rarely practiced, although in exceptional cases it was performed for the corpses of pregnant or barren women, lepers, and those who have met a violent death.[222] Mummification was generally reserved for high-ranking religious leaders or incarnate lamas.[223] The most common method of disposal in pre-modern Tibet, however, was that of offering the corpse to vultures.[224] Consequently, our discussion will focus exclusively on this particular mode of ritual disposal.

In the first part of the funeral—the first two or three days after death—attention is focused largely on the corpse. When death has been determined, word is sent immediately to close family and friends. The body is left in the position in which it last rested and is not touched or handled by anyone. The belief is that if the corpse is touched, the deceased's consciousness may exit prematurely from the point of first contact, which is generally thought to have rather unfortunate consequences. An attempt is made by a local lama or lay ritual specialist to draw the consciousness out of the body through the crown of the head—this is the orifice that is believed best to lead to a favorable rebirth in a buddha's pure realm. This specialized technique of transference (*'pho-ba*) is usually performed at the house where the person has died. In Mumford's opinion, the

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[221]THUP, p. 21; Sangay 1984, p. 37.

[222]Wylie 1964a, p. 233; THUP, p. 21; Sangay 1984, p. 37; cf. also Bell 1928, p. 289. The connection between water and death of an unusual sort bears cross-cultural comparison with the medieval European notion of water as a liminal space between the living and the dead. See Barber 1988, pp. 147-153; Schmitt 1998, p. 184.

[223]Bell 1928, p. 295. Details of the techniques used by Tibetans in mummifying the saintly dead can be found in Govinda 1970, p. 119.

[224]One might argue that as a form of sky-burial, the rite of vulture disposal represents, on some sub-level of Tibet's historical consciousness, a means of restoring a link between heaven and earth; a link which is reported to have been severed by an ancient and gullible king.

transference rite is merely symbolic, for the rest of the funeral proceeds under the assumption that the ritual had not been successful.[225] Soon other monks are assembled to perform the necessary rites and blessings (*mgyogs-bsngo*) and to prepare for the casting of the death horoscope (*gshin-rtsis*). Throughout all of this, offering rites are performed to keep demons (*bdud-gdon*) away from the corpse. The threat of demonic possession is particularly great once the consciousness has left the body. It is feared that evil spirits may enter the corpse and reanimate it, in which case the body may be transformed into a zombie (*ro-langs*).[226] To guard against such attacks, the corpse is watched (*snye-srung*) continuously throughout the day and night. During the day, the monks chant prayers and perform purification rites. Among other matters, the presence of demonic forces is determined by reading the death horoscope.

The astrologer (*rtsis-pa*) is given the deceased's year of birth and the date and time of death. From this information he is able to determine the best day for disposal of the corpse and whether any special rituals should be performed to protect the deceased's family against demonic attacks.[227]

> "The death horoscope (*rtsis*) answers a number of questions. First, it tells whether or not the death was timely. Second, it specifies the type and direction of demonic attack, and warns of subsequent attacks that threaten the living. Third, it tells whether the birth horoscopes of members of the community are incompatible with that of the deceased, to indicate who may prepare, carry, or cremate the body. Fourth, it reveals the previous life of the deceased and predicts

[225]Mumford 1989, p. 198.
[226]Bell 1928, pp. 138-139; Wylie 1964b.
[227]THUP, p. 7; Sangay 1984, p. 32; cf. also Brauen 1982, pp. 321-322; Ramble 1982, p. 335; Mumford 1989, pp. 198-204.

> future possible lives, so that the best among these can be promoted by funerary remedies."[228]

The reading of the death horoscope is thus essential for organizing the rest of the funeral ceremony. In other words, every subsequent ritual action is based on the conclusions reached by the astrologer. Among the most significant of these calculations are the immediate cause of death, the prediction of future destiny, and the handling, timing, and direction of corpse removal. It is predicted frequently that the deceased will spend a short period of time in hell (*dmyal-ba*, *na-rak*) as a result of the fruition of sins (*sdig-pa*) accumulated in previous lives. The lama assures that the deceased will eventually achieve a favorable rebirth, but only if certain conditions are met, and these tend to be determined by whether or not the family has enough wealth to commission the lama to perform various merit-generating rituals,[229] such as the *na-rak dong-sprugs* [churning the depths of hell] or *bskang-bshags* [confession and expiation] rites.

The corpse is kept inside the house until the day and time determined by the astrological calculations. To prevent the corpse from smelling, it is washed by monks in an iron, copper, or wooden tub containing water scented with camphor, saffron, or other fine fragrances.[230] The bodily orifices are blocked with butter or tied with wool or cotton to prevent any discharge of fluids, and the body is then bound with rope into a crouching position, as described by Ramble, "with the feet together and the knees drawn up. The arms are secured around the thighs with the hand tied between the legs, and the back is broken by pulling the head up and jerking it forward. The head is then pushed down between the knees and the corpse is left to stiffen in that position".[231] Sangay has

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[228]Mumford 1989, p. 198.
[229]Mumford 1989, p. 111.
[230]THUP, p. 10; Sangay 1984, p. 33.
[231]Ramble 1982, p. 335.

suggested that breaking the back of the corpse and bundling it in such a way not only prevents it from becoming a zombie, but also relieves some of the financial burden of having to hire more than one person to carry the corpse to the cemetery.[232]

The corpse is taken from the house at the specified time. Prior to its removal, however, the bundled body is first wrapped in a white shawl and placed on a platform (*ro bcug-sa*). A framework of four short upright poles is erected around the corpse, with a fifth bound horizontally across the shoulders (representing the arms), and the entire frame is covered in clothing appropriate to the deceased's gender.[233] This construction is designed to serve as an effigy or surrogate body (*sob*) of the deceased. Its head and face are represented by a large ball of wool covered with a white cloth and a sheet of paper on which is sketched the rough features of the deceased's countenance. With incense burning near the doorway to purify the threshold, the platform is turned in the auspicious direction indicated by the astrologer and then carried on the shoulders of several men, each chosen in accordance with the horoscope reading. The procession is led by a lama carrying incense who is followed by other lamas playing various instruments. Another lama follows from behind holding in his left hand a long white scarf which drags along the ground. This scarf is intended to indicate (*bstan*) to the deceased the path (*lam*) to the cemetery.[234]

When the procession reaches the cemetery (*dur-khrod*), the body is removed from the platform and placed face down on a large flat rock. The framework effigy is dismantled. As a preliminary, the ritual specialist responsible for dismembering and disposing the body—the so-called "corpse-cutter" (*phung gtor-pa*, also *gcod-pa*)—burns

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[232]THUP, p. 11; Sangay 1984, p. 34.
[233]Ramble 1982, p. 336.
[234]Ramble 1982, p. 337.

a heap of purifying incense and slashes the corpse several times with a knife.[235] He then secures the body by tying its neck to a stone and begins to cut it into parts. The scavenging birds (*dur-bya*) which have gathered in the sky are then allowed to consume the body. After the flesh is completely devoured, the brain matter (*klad*) is removed from the skull with a flat stone and placed under a heavy rock while the bones are pulverized into a powder. If the skull has been requested by a lama or by a member of the family, it is set aside, otherwise the skull is also pounded along with the bones. The brain is then taken from underneath the rock and mixed with the powdered remains.[236] The bone and brain mixture are worked into a dough (*tsha-tsha*), which is often pressed into the shape of miniature stupas or images of deities to be distributed in various pure locations, such as caves, streams, and the branches of trees.[237]

When the procession returns to the house, each person is purified with sacred water and the smoke of burning juniper branches. In this way, the entire group is cleansed of the pollution of death. Until the funeral rites are completed, it is believed that the family and home continue to be infected by the impurity of death. Constant fumigation with incense and water are thus necessary. The dangerous presence of spiritual contagion is marked by various ritual taboos which cannot be lifted before the final rites have been performed. Family members wear their hair loose without braids or ribbons and do not wash their faces, wear jewelry, or put on bright colored clothing.[238] For forty-nine days (believed to be the longest possible duration of the bardo experience) singing and dancing are prohibited, and the family undergoes the prescribed period of mourning.

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[235]THUP, p. 18; Sangay 1984, p. 36.
[236]THUP, p. 19; Sangay 1984, p. 37.
[237]Ramble 1982, p. 341.
[238]THUP, p. 3; Sangay 1984, pp. 30-31.

Throughout the period of mourning, exorcisms are performed. Exorcisms are considered rites of purification.[239] It is assumed that the demon who ultimately caused the death (*gshed-ma*) may continue to linger near the home, and thus exorcism is performed in order to prevent this evil spirit from seizing another family member. Demons represent the presence of afflictive agents and stand as harbingers of destruction. Generally, demonic attack is explained in terms of principal Buddhist doctrines. It is presumed that demon possession is caused ultimately by the fruition of negative karma, and that the only means available for eliminating these past stains and for destroying the afflictive demon is to commission the powers of a lama or lay ritual specialist. In order to perform the exorcism rites, a small ransom effigy (*glud*) is constructed. A figure is carefully crafted by the presiding lama and painted with dyes. This substitute is embellished symbolically in such a way that the demon will be lured to it. A process of deceiving this demon begins with recitation from an exorcism text. As the lama chants verses from the text, he highlights the specific karmic cause of the demon possession. By seizing upon this crisis point and linking it to an ethical causal sequence, the lama is able to frame and render intelligible an experience that might otherwise appear as an arbitrary evil. The implicit value of the exorcism lies, therefore, in the lama's power to place potentially incoherent suffering within an acceptable and familiar framework; namely, the ethical sphere of karmic retribution and responsibility.

Through various *tantric* techniques of visualization and recitation, the lama breathes life into the ransom effigy and transforms it from a simple construction of base material into an efficacious reality.[240] The idea is that if the figure is not transformed and remains as merely a crude likeness, the demon will not be fooled and instead will demand real

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[239]The following summary of the exorcism rite is based mainly on details described in Mumford 1989, pp. 149-164 and 204-205, but see also Ortner 1978, pp. 91-127.
[240]Mumford 1989, p. 152.

flesh and blood. The lama must trick the demon into entering the effigy rather than seizing the life of a family member, and to do this, he must make the figure appear deceptively more desirable than the actual humans themselves. The lama positions himself deliberately "betwixt and between" the two realms inhabited on one side by the human sponsors and on the other by the afflictive demon. By manipulating his liminal position and luring the demon into the effigy, the lama is able to re-enact the critical moment in which the deceased was seized by the death demon. In ritually repeating the first moment of attack, the lama reverses its effect by diverting the evil spirit away from the surviving relatives and into the lifeless substitute, where it is then trapped and rendered powerless. All of this requires an extraordinary spiritual prowess. Tibetan exorcists are thus often perceived as possessing special divine powers and capable of great magical feats. For this reason, they are usually approached with an ambivalence of fear and respect. We will have a chance to return to this subject when we examine the controversial life of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa in Chapter 5.

After the rites of disposal, purification, and exorcism are complete, attention turns to the deceased. Since it is believed that in most cases the dead cannot help themselves while traveling along the perilous path of the bardo, they must require the assistance (*rogs-ram*) of their surviving relatives. As we have already begun to see, this assistance is mediated usually by the monastery through a series of rituals prescribed in texts such as those included in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* cycles. This relationship implies a contractual agreement between lama and patron and rests on faith in the efficacy of the monastery's prayers and rites for the dead. Most participants, monks and laity alike, believe that the deceased can be aided and even liberated by these ritual activities. A passage from the *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* provides a set of reasons for such conviction:

> "It is impossible that any person of superior, average, or below average capacities not be liberated by these [prayers and ritual actions]. If asked why this is so, it is because, (1) consciousness in the bardo possesses mundane clairvoyance and thus it can hear whatever I [the lama] say; (2) even though it is deaf and blind, now its sense faculties are complete, and so it can understand whatever I say; (3) constantly pursued by fear and terror, it thinks with undistracted concentration "What should I do", and thus it always listens to whatever I say; (4) since the consciousness has no support [i.e., body], it immediately goes to whatever is placed before it, and so it is easy to guide; (5) mindfulness is nine times more lucid, so even though it may be stupid, the intellect at this point has become so clear by the power of karma that it is capable of meditating on everything that is taught. These qualities are the reason it is beneficial to perform the rituals for the dead. It is extremely important, therefore, to persevere in reading this *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* for up to forty-nine days."[241]

In basic terms, the bardo ritual is a plea for the purification of the sins of the departed, for release from the perilous pathways of the bardo, and for auspicious rebirth among one of the three higher destinies—human, demi-god, or god. The prescribed texts that accompany these rites, such as those included in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* cycles, ritually recreate the circumstances of the deceased's journey through the

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[241]See B1a, fols. 189.5-191.1: *de rnams kyis gang zag dbang po rab 'bring tha ma yang mi grol mi srid do : de ci'i phyir zhe na : bar do'i rnam shes de la zag bcas kyi mngon shes yod pas : bdag gi ji smras khos* [190] *thos pa dang cig : 'on long yin yang : de'i dus su dbang po tshangs bas ci smras go ba dang gnyis : 'jigs skrag gis rtag tu bdas nas ci drag na snam pa'i dran pa yengs med du yod pas bdag gis ci smras nyan nas 'ong pa dang gsum : rnam shes rten med pas mdun pa gar gtad du thal gyis slebs te kha lo bsgyur du sla ba dang bzhi : dran pa dgu 'gyur gyis gsal bas lkug pa yin kyang de'i dus su las kyi dbang gis rigs pa gsal du song nas : ci bslab pa thams cad sgom shes pa'i yon tan dang gnas le lta bu'i yon tan yod pa'i phyir ro : des na gshin po'i cho ga byas pas phan yon yod pa'i rgyu mtshan yang de ltar yin no : de bsan zhag bzhi bcu zhe dgu'i bar : bar* [191] *do thos grol chen mo 'di klog par nan tan bya ba shin tu nas gal che'o.* Cf. also a similar reasoning in B1a, fols. 208.4-209.4, but with more emphasis on the compassion and grace of the deities.

intermediate-state after death, and invoke the image of buddhas and bodhisattvas coming down to lead the departed along the path.

> "When the time has come to go alone and without friends, may the Compassionate Ones provide refuge to so-and-so [insert name of the deceased] who has no refuge. Protect her, defend her, be a refuge from the great darkness of the bardo, turn her away from the great storms of karma, provide comfort from the great fear and terror of the Lord of Death, deliver her from the long and perilous pathway of the bardo."[242]

Some of the texts (those most familiar in the west) describe the psychophysical process of dying and the separation of consciousness from the body, while others paint images of the harrowing experiences of transition and rebirth. The vast majority of texts, however, provide ritual directions and prayers for assisting the dead and dying.

On the third or fourth day after death, the lamas gather in the village monastery for the beginning ceremony of the bardo liturgy. This is also the time believed to be the first day of the deceased's journey in the bardo. Prayers are recited and preparations are made for the important guidance rite (*gnas-'dren cho-ga*). A large earthenware jar is suspended from a roof-beam in the deceased's home, usually over the site where the corpse had been laid.[243] The jar is dressed in a manner resembling the platform effigy and adorned with various ornaments. Burnt offerings (*sbyin-sreg*) are provided by the family every morning and evening. It is understood that the fragrance from these smoke offerings draws the consciousness of the departed to the house and into the earthen jar. Clearly, this

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[242] *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*, B1a, fol. 126.2-5: *gcig por grogs med par 'gro dgos ba'i dus la babs na thugs rje can rnams che ge mo skyabs med pa 'di la skyabs mdzod cig : mgon mdzod cig : dpung gnyen mdzod cig : bar do'i mun nag chen po las skyobs shig : las kyi rlung dmar chen po las bzlog cig : gshin rje'i 'jigs skrag chen po las skyobs shig : bar do'i 'phrang ring po las sgrol cig.*

[243] Ramble 1982, p. 339.

ritual mechanism is founded on the old Indo-Buddhist conception of the bardo consciousness existing in the form of a *gandharva* (*dri-za*), or one "that eats (*arvati, za*) odors (*gandham, dri-ma*)".

Seven days later, the first series of the "seven-day juncture" rites (*bdun-tshigs cho-ga*) are performed. The principle behind this weekly sequence of ritual is the old idea reaching back to the *Abhidharmakośa* that the intermediate-state is divided up into seven short phases, each lasting a week, for a total of up to forty-nine days. The ceremony is conducted by the monks at the deceased's home. At the start of the ritual they prepare offering cakes (*gtor-ma*) for the performance of a "ripening initiation" (*smin-byed dbang-grub*), which is believed to purify the sins and enhance the virtues of the departed. Offerings are placed on an altar or the household shrine, which has been furnished with pictures and objects necessary for the guidance ritual. The images, according to Detlef Lauf, consist usually of various buddhas and bodhisattvas, and paintings of the one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities associated with the *zhi-khro* mandala.[244] The pictures are used throughout the guidance ceremony as a means of properly identifying the deities encountered by the deceased along the bardo path.

Prayers and instructions are then read from the texts of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and/or *Bar-do thos-grol*. At best, the reading of these texts occurs throughout each of the seven-day junctures until the forty-ninth day has been reached. It is not uncommon, however, for the full seven-week sequence to be abbreviated.[245] In fact, Martin Brauen has related that in Tibet there actually existed three types of funeral ceremony, each defined in terms of the duration of its performance:

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[244]Lauf 1977, p. 76.
[245]Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 20.

"1. a long ceremony lasting at least one week, but which, when performed in full, could even last seven weeks;
2. a medium-length ceremony lasting two or three days;
3. a short rite lasting two or three hours."[246]

The length and frequency of recitation and ritual performance is dependent largely upon the wealth of the family.[247] The complete bardo liturgy can be extremely time-consuming and expensive. In my brief experience among Tibetans in India, rites were observed for several weeks only and rarely exceeded the third juncture of twenty-one days. In all cases, the reasons for the shortened ceremony was both money and the lack of availability of specific high-ranking lamas who were most favored by the sponsors. Nevertheless, despite the apparent fact that the full forty-nine day ceremony is not very common, in describing the bardo ritual I have chosen to focus on the complete sequence, since it best represents the ideal structure inscribed in the ritual texts.

In the third or fourth week, a merit-making ceremony is performed on an astrologically appropriate day.[248] All the monks gather again in the village monastery to perform various purification rites. The effigy is reassembled and placed in front of the main altar along with a printed image (*byang-bu*) of the deceased, which is stamped with his/her name and gender.[249] This name-card (*mtshan-byang*) is attached to a stick, placed on a lotus moulded from clay or dough, and set in front of a burning candle on the altar so that it faces the larger effigy. The consciousness is then tranferred from the earthenware jar (previously brought from the home) into the printed picture. The leader of the liturgy

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[246]Brauen and Kvaerne 1978c, pp. 12-13.
[247]The deceased's success in locating a favorable destiny can also be negatively effected by the family's wealth, or lack thereof. See Mumford 1989, pp. 203-204.
[248]Ramble 1982, p. 340.
[249]In the more abbreviated versions of this ceremony, the *byang-bu* rite takes place only three days after death. See Kvaerne 1997a, p. 494.

recites prayers and guiding instructions directly to the printed card. The essential elements of this rite are described by Lauf:

> "The sByang-bu of the dead person occupies the central position in the ritual, and is addressed during the ceremony, admonished, guided, and imbued with spiritual powers by various abhiṣeka-consecrations, just as if it were an active participant. It is a question of the ability of the awareness-principle to find its way, spontaneously and with the guidance of the lamas, to liberation beyond the places of rebirth. The sByang-bu receives the place of honor in the view of the lama directing the ceremonies and is invited by him to take part in the ritual activity. The dead person's image represents him, and during the death ritual it travels in a symbolically ordered sequence on a specially prepared surface through all the various realms of incarnation that are possible places of rebirth. This surface as a cosmic plan of the six worlds or existence (T. 'Gro-ba'i khams drug) is placed on a rectangular wooden board or on a kind of maṇḍala of the worlds. In the middle row of the rectangular field are six squares representing the six worlds. This row is bordered on either side by another row of six squares. Small bowls of sacrificial rice are placed on the squares of one row for the six Buddhas, and on the other row bowls with small cakes of dough (t. gTor-ma) are placed, which are offered to the inhabitants of the six worlds in the name of the dead person. These gTor-ma offerings are gifts for the evil and demonic spirits of the lower worlds which strive to harm the departed soul."[250]

As the lama describes each of the six realms of rebirth, he places the printed card on the appropriate square, offering a small bowl of rice to the realm's attendant buddha and ritual cakes (*gtor-ma*) to its inhabitants. For each offering made by the lama it is believed that

[250]Lauf 1977, pp. 127-128.

the deceased experiences the corresponding realm. As each move is completed, the gate to that world is symbolically closed and rebirth in that particular location prevented. Here, we should not forget the specialized technique of "closing the womb door" (*mngal-sgo 'gag-pa*) expounded early on by such figures as Mi-la-ras-pa. We might recall that the notion of obstructing the bardo (*bar-do khegs-par 'gyur*) was one of the hallmarks of the *tantric* reinterpretations of the exoteric *antarābhava* doctrine. That being said, when all gates of rebirth have been shut, the rectangular board is taken away and the lama holds the printed image over the flame of the burning candle. As the fire consumes the paper the lama pronounces that the sins of the departed have been reconciled and the deceased has found its destiny.[251]

The burning of the printed name-card marks the end of the standard bardo ritual performed for the average adult.[252] The ashes of the *byang-bu* are spared and mixed into the powdered bone and clay mixture retrieved from the cemetery, and all of this is formed into small cones (*tsha-tsha*) or miniature replicas of stupas, buddhas, and bodhisattvas. For the family, on that day, the long period of mourning is over and they are permitted to bathe, comb their hair, and so forth.[253] These fresh and cleansing activities signal the symbolic return of the family to the community of the living, and correspond directly to the rites that introduce the deceased into a new world.

Throughout the chapters that follow I will attempt to explore the historical process in Tibet that produced the specific set of texts known collectively as the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. Inscribed in these texts are some of Tibet's most popular rites and prayers in preparation for dying, litanies for the aid of the departed, and directives to accompany the general funeral services. In the process of my

[251] Ramble 1982, p. 341.
[252] On death rituals for children, see Blondeau 1997.
[253] THUP, p. 22; Sangay 1984, p. 38.

examination, I will also investigate at some depth the lives of those who created, preserved, and transmitted these texts, and in the end offer a few conclusions about the standardization of the *Bar-do thos-grol* itself with an eye toward the details of its printed history. In the next chapter we turn our attention to the content and structural unity of the Kar-gling literary cycles.

2.

The Treasure Texts of Karma-gling-pa

The nature of the textual artifact, the form in which a text itself is codified and distributed, influences critically any historical investigation into the process of that text's transmission and the diffusion of its particular religious content. In the present context, this is a critical issue since Karma-gling-pa's textual revelations may not have been widely available in printed form until the eighteenth century. Before that period, the individual collections circulated in manuscript form and were preserved in various monastic libraries, each reflecting particular lineage affiliations and local customs. During the late seventeenth century, it became more economically feasible for the large ecclesiastic institutions to assemble these local manuscripts and to print them as books. This is in fact how the various editions of the *Zhi-khro-dgongs-pa rang-grol* came to be produced. Although this seems clear enough, the history of the process involved in the production and circulation of these texts has not been the subject of critical study by scholars in the field. Furthermore, the structural organization of this cycle has not been previously examined, nor has its content been comprehensively catalogued either chronologically or systematically.[1] An account of the broader history of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* can only begin with an understanding of the collections themselves, and so in order to provide a basis for their study in the chapters that follow we begin by exploring the content and structure of the complete text cycle, with special focus on the smaller set of funerary texts collectively referred to as the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*, Tibet's so-called "Book of the Dead".

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[1] An exhaustive catalogue is provided in Appendix 3 and 4. Henk Blezer gives an alternatively arranged list in Blezer 1997, pp. 156-170. Also, a cross-referenced index of only a partial selection of Kar-gling editions can be found in Back 1987, pp. 103-130.

1. THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE KAR-GLING *ZHI-KHRO*

In the second half of the fourteenth century, in accordance with the ancient prophecies (*lung-bstan*) of Padmasambhava, the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa is said to have excavated *gter-ma*, "treasures", from a location on Sgam-po-gdar mountain, north of the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastery of Dwags-lha Sgam-po in the southeastern region of Dwags-po. These discoveries comprised two major textual collections, the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and the *Thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro* [*Mahākarūṇa, the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities of the Lotus*].[2] The latter work has not yet been traced, and so its precise content is unknown. Nevertheless, supposedly both *Zhi-khro* collections included instructions for practice on the six types of bardo (*bar-do rnams-drug*).[3] The specific set of texts that we know as *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*, however, seems to have been derived solely from the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, with a few possible exceptions.[4] After Karma-gling-pa's untimely death, we are told that his father and son divided up his possessions, including various books and shrine images. Among these objects were found a number of complete and incomplete manuscripts detailing the cycle of initiation

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[2]In some of the later histories a third work was also said to be included, the *Mgon-po sde-brgyad*. Unfortunately, the work is not presently extant. Reference in TMLG, fol. 65a; GTCB, fol. 182; NBDS fols. 228-229; BDTT, vol. 3, p. 523.

[3]GKCB, pp. 457-458. See discussion in Chapter 1. Generally, the six bardo states are listed as follows: (1) *rang-bzhin gnas-pa'i bar-do*, (2) *ting-nge-'dzin bsam-gtan-gyi bar-do*, (3) *rmi-lam-gyi bar-do*, (4) *'chi-ka'i bar-do*, (5) *chos-nyid bar-do*, (6) *srid-pa'i bar-do*.

[4]The incipit of the *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol* states clearly that it belongs to the *Bar-do thos-grol* of the *Padma zhi-khro*. See, for example, B1a, fol. 500.3-4: *padma zhi khro'i bar do thos grol las : dbang skur ngo sprod mthong grol chen mo yi : chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod gong du song : da ni srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod bstan*. Is it possible that this is the only surviving work from Karma-gling-pa's *Thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro*? On that question, we should also note the evidence for the existence of another manuscript belonging to the *Padma zhi-khro*. In the *dkar-chag* of an unpublished Kar-gling *Thos-grol* collection preserved in the library of Ri-bo-che Rje-drung Byams-pa-'byung-gnas of Padma-bkod (RB), there is indication that the version of the famous *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* included there actually forms part of the larger *Padma zhi-khro* collection. The evidence comes from the full title given in that index—*Thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro'i nyams-khrid yang-snying lam-khyer las chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs thos-grol chen-mo*. I wish to thank Gene Smith for kindly sharing his notes on this rare collection. We might furthermore consider the "rediscovered treasure" (*yang-gter*) known by the similar title *Bla-rdzogs thugs-gsum thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro* in RCTD, vol. 34, pp. 235-432. The original text is said to have been revealed by a certain Nyi-ma-seng-ge and later recovered by 'Jam-dbyangs Mkhyen-rtse'i-dbang-po (1820-1892). Gyurme Dorje claims that Nyi-ma-seng-ge was a descendant of Karma-gling-pa, but I have seen no evidence to support his statement. See Dorje 1987, p.170n.186.

rites of the *Bar-do thos-grol*.[5] The suggestion is that Karma-gling-pa had already written out a small selection of manuscripts on bardo and related topics, and had been working on additional materials just before his death.[6] It is possible that Karma-gling-pa's father and son found these old manuscripts, used them as a basis, and then rewrote or extended the originals, but we cannot be certain. As the historical record indicates, both father and son were more than just the first disciples, they were also the first and most effective transmitters of the Kar-gling revelations.[7] We will have reason to return to this story in the next chapter, but for now it is important to note that the texts inspired by Karma-gling-pa's discoveries were perhaps only for a brief moment controlled by a single hand. In a very short time after Karma-gling-pa had recovered the texts they were being copied, reordered, and revised by others close to him, but not by the author himself. This tells us much about the nature of the text collection believed to have come from the treasure trove of Sgam-po-gdar, unearthed by the revealer Karma-gling-pa in the fourteenth century.

Despite the widespread popularity of the *Zhi-khro* cycle in later centuries and its clear associations with a figure named Karma-gling-pa, the extent to which the contents of the present recensions of the *Zhi-khro-dgongs-pa rang-grol* actually reach back in time to Karma-gling-pa's original revelations is unknown; neither a list of contents nor the traditional *kha-byang*, or "certificate of prophecy", have been preserved in the surviving literature.[8] Our knowledge of the texts included in these collections is derived almost entirely from the available reprint editions and from a few notable but rather late transmission

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[5]GTCB, fol. 184; GKCB, p. 458; BDTT, p. 524.
[6]The actual titles and content of these works is a matter of speculation, although I presume based on textual analysis that they would have included the particular set of texts discussed below.
[7]On the early phases in the codification and dissemination of the Kar-gling revelations, see Chapter 3 and comments in Cuevas, "Rgya-ra-ba and the Institutionalization of Tibetan Funeral Liturgy in the Late Fifteenth Century" (forthcoming).
[8]On the traditional preparations for the discovery of treasure literature, see Thondup 1986, pp. 137-141.

records (*gsan-yig*).[9] In cases such as this where an original or relatively early list of contents cannot be located, the correct identification of the core set of texts is extremely difficult. The composite and cumulative nature of Tibetan *gter-ma* literature creates certain problems for the textual historian. First of all, most of the available recensions of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, for example, come to us in the form of xylographic prints and facsimile reproductions from blocks carved only in the last two centuries. This means that we have little choice but to compare texts from invariably late stages of the literary tradition. Barring the obvious obstacles that this introduces, there is also the problem that these relatively recent collections are all comprised of a locally determined blend of supplemental material from different historical periods. This material reflects the persistence of local variations on what appears to be a unifed tradition whose boundaries are inexactly defined. To complicate matters even further, the works contained in these editions are in many cases authored anonymously, with attributions to specific compositors occurring only sporadically. These fluid textual boundaries have over time kept space open for the inclusion of new material as well as for the alteration, adaptation, and expansion of older works and ritual programs. Although such revision certainly reflects the changing values and interests of newer generations of religious practitioner, and provides important insights into the history of the cycle's transmission, these intriguing layers of history obscure the foundational structure, or core unity of the literary tradition. By "core" I mean those texts that are either historically speaking the earliest documents of the tradition, or practically speaking the central works around which the supplemental literature has been orchestrated.[10] With an eye toward making it less

[9]The printed editions of the Kar-gling cycle consulted for this study are by and large limited to those publications acquired by the United States Library of Congress under the directives of Public Law 480. A list of these editions is provided in Appendix 2; cf. also discussion in Chapter 3.

[10]Janet Gyatso has published several valuable articles on the textual characteristics of the standard *gter-ma* collection, including descriptions of the general features of the root teaching. See particularly, Gyatso 1986, 1991, 1993, 1996, and n.d..

difficult to uncover this fundamental core, I provide here a typology and cursory overview of the main topics represented in the Kar-gling collection, with identification of some of the more significant works in each category.

In the *gsan-yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) the texts of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* are organized into five categories based on the main subjects addressed. These topics include: (1) prophecies and lineal history (*lung-bstan, rgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus*), (2) generation stage initiations and *sādhana-s* (*dbang-sgrub bskyed-rim*), (3) completion stage hearing- and wearing-liberation texts (*grol-byed thos-pa, btags-pas grol-ba'i rdzogs-rim*), (4) completion stage path-of-means practices (*thabs-lam la brten-pa'i rdzogs-rim*), and (5) teachings on the assembly of dharma protectors (*bka'-srung skor*).[11] With only slight variation, these rubrics are repeated in the *gsan-yig* of Gter-bdag-gling-pa (1646-1714), of Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul I Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal of Bhutan (1708-1736), and of Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (1904-1987).[12] From these lists a standard classification scheme can be formulated as a useful tool for arranging the individual texts of the cycle and, more importantly, to introduce some order to this rather large and unwieldy literary collection. The resulting scheme is thus comprised of seven categories :

1. history (*lo-rgyus*)
2. liturgy (*sgrub-dbang*)
3. liberation upon hearing (*thos-grol*)
4. liberation upon wearing (*btags-grol*)

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[11]DL, vol. 4, fols. 86.3-91.3.

[12]Gter-bdag-gling-pa (DL, vol. 4, fol. 87.5) lists the following categories: (1) *lo-rgyus*, (2) *dbang-sgrub*, (3) *rdzogs-rim*, (4) *ngo-sprod*, (5) *thabs-lam*, and (6) *bstan-srung*. Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (ZD, fol. 510.1) gives (1) *bskyed-rim* (2) *rdzogs-rim*, (3) *khrid*, (4) *ngo-sprod*. Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (DJ, fol. 175.6) divides the collection into seven categories: (1) *lo-rgyus*, (2) *dbang*, (3) *bskyed-rim*, (4) *rdzogs-rim*, (5) *ngo-sprod*, (6) *thabs-lam*, and (7) *bstan-srung*.

5. path of means (*thabs-lam*)

6. religious protectors (*bstan-srung*)

7. catalogue (*dkar-chag*)

Based on close inspection of the content of the texts themselves and following the classification of rituals employed in the catalogue (*dkar-chag*) of the *Rin-chen gter-mdzod* [*Precious Anthology of Treasures*] the second category, on liturgy, can be further subdivided into eight rubrics:[13]

2.a. sādhana (*sgrub-thabs*)

2.b. initiation (*dbang*)

2.c. prayer and recitation (*smon-lam, bsnyen-sgrub*)

2.d. expiation and confession (*bskang-bshags*)

2.e. ritual cake offering (*gtor-ma*)

2.f. guidance ritual for the dead (*gnas-'dren, gnas-lung*)

2.g. burnt offering (*sbyin-sreg*)

2.h. cremation rite (*ro-sreg*)

It is not possible in the present context to explore fully the depths of these Tibetan typologies including all of their associated texts—many of the topics have been sufficiently addressed in the existing scholarship.[14] A focused overview of some of the basic features of each genre, with representative bibliographical citations, must suffice.

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[13]RCKC, vol. 1.

[14]The relevant sources are too numerous to mention, but a sampling of some of the more important secondary references can be listed as follows: On the category history, see Tucci 1947; Vostrikov 1970; Hoffman 1970; Satô 1993; Kuijp 1996; Martin 1997. To date, the most notable study on ritual is still Beyer 1978. This source offers reliable information on several of the sub-categories listed above, see especially pp. 64-226 (*sgrub-thabs*), 264-275 (*sbyin-sreg*), 340-345 (*gtor-ma*), 399-403 (*dbang*), 432-458 (*bsnyen-pa*). On death ritual and cremation, see Ramble 1982; Kvaerne 1985; Mumford 1989, pp. 195-224. Relgious protectors are discussed in Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 343-454. And a brief description of catalogues, or table of contents, can be found in Martin 1996a.

1. History

The texts from within the cycle itself that serve as our best source for a critical history of the literary tradition consist primarily of the prophecies (*lung-bstan*) of Padmasambhava, the *them-byang*, or "fulfillment certificate",[15] biographical sketches, records of lineal succession (*brgyud-rim*), and supplications to the lineage teachers (*brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*). We must be aware, however, that much of the information expressed in these sources is rarely "historical" in our sense of the term, but of course this is true of religious literature in general. Still we should approach with some caution those texts which we presume to be "historical" documents. In this light, it is fairly clear that the most valuable works of the historical genre in the Kar-gling collection are the two texts composed by Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho (b.1430) and his student Chos-rje Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan (Saṃghaketu, b.1446), respectively.[16] The first work, *Brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus nor-bu'i phreng-ba* [*Garland of Jewels: An Abridged Transmission History*], composed in 1499, gives a brief traditional account of the three primary transmission lineages of Karma-gling-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*—the "wisdom-mind transmission of the victorious ones" (*rgyal-ba dgongs-pa'i-brgyud*), the "symbolic transmission of the awareness-holders" (*rig-'dzin brda'i-brgyud*), and "the authentic oral transmission of human teachers" (*gang-zag snyan-khung-kyi-brgyud*). The three transmissions are standard in Rdzogs-chen literature, but for our purposes, obviously, the oral lineage is the one worthy of further analysis. We are indeed fortunate that this text exists, for at the moment it is the earliest source for our knowledge of the

[15]For details on the importance of "certificates" (*byang*) in the treasure tradition, see Gyatso nd.

[16]Rgya-ra-ba was the fourth lineage-holder of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* tradition. His life and activities will be examined in Chapter 3. As for Chos-rje Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan, not much is known about his life other than what we find reported in his own text. There we learn that he was born in the fire-male-tiger year 1446 at a place called So-rgyal into the Sbas family of the Sna clan. His father was named Sngo-'dos and his mother, Ye-shes-sgron-ma. His principal student was one Saṃgharatna (Dge-'dun-nor-bu), who in turn was the master of a certain Ratnabhadra (Nor-bu-bzang-po). See OGTL.

lives of Rgya-ra-ba and of his teacher lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer (Guru Sūryacandraraśmi, b.1409/21). Despite the considerable importance of Rgya-ra-ba's text for understanding the early history of the tradition, it is peculiar that there have been almost no references to it in western studies.[17] In the next chapter, we will use the text's narrative to frame our discussion of the origin and early development of the Kar-gling tradition.

The second most valuable historical document is a brief text by Dge-'dun rgyal-mtshan composed in 1503 or 1515 and entitled *O-rgyan rin-po-che'i gter-ston lung-bstan dang khung-btsun-pa bla-ma-brgyud-pa'i rim-pa rnams* [*Precious One from Orgyan's Prophecy of the Treasure Revealer and the Series of the Authentic Lineage Teachers*].[18] It consists primarily of a series of quotes extracted from the prophecies of Padmasambhava concerning the future discovery and subsequent diffusion of the *Bar-do thos-grol* instructions. Although there are a few very brief biographical references to Karma-gling-pa and his immediate disciples, the value of Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan's work lies in the fact that it preserves passages from the cycle's prophetic literature that are no longer independently extant.[19] The prophecies provide potentially significant historical clues, some of them at least derived from older sources. But again we must always keep in mind that such literature, in the words of Gregory Schopen, may be, and probably is, "nothing more or less than carefully contrived ideal paradigms".[20]

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[17]To my knowledge Dieter Back is the only previous scholar to have made use of information contained in this text. See Back 1987, p. 18.

[18]The colophon states that the text was written by Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan in a forest hermitage during the first half of the last month of autumn in the year of the pig. See OGTL, fol. 26: *drin chen saṃga'i mtshan can gyis : thugs dgongs rdzogs phyir dge 'dun rgyal mtshan gyis : phag lo ston zla tha chung yar ngo la chanda nags kyi khrod du bris ba'o.*

[19]In many Tibetan *gter-ma* traditions, the forecast statements are found usually within the cycle itself in the so-called *kha-byang*, "prophecy certificate", or they may be located in more comprehensive works such as O-rgyan-gling-pa's (1323-c.1360) *Padma bka'-thang*. Unfortunately, in the case of the Kar-gling collections, a *kha-byang* has not been located. Also the cycle's prophecy does not appear anywhere in O-rgyan-gling-pa's text. Consequently, we must piece one together through quoted passages in other sources.

[20]Schopen 1997, p. 3. Schopen's comments are provided in the context of his critique of how scholars in Buddhist Studies have traditionally accepted "as adequate reflections of historical reality" texts whose historical accuracy and reliability have never been questioned or properly assessed.

In addition to the transmission records and prophecy statements, the text cycle also contains a number of distinctive lineage supplications (*brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*).[21] These works are simply devotional petitions addressed to particular members of a teaching lineage, the names of which are often listed in chronological order. Although typical petitions address each figure with only four lines of verse, the prayers are significant in that they provide the names of identifiable personalities. Equipped with this information it is then possible to trace relationships not only between members of the lineage but also between individual texts, and from there to begin to distinguish the possible institutions and groups responsible for maintaining and disseminating the tradition as a whole.

2. *Liturgy*

From early in its development, the Tibetan *gter-ma* tradition consolidated a large collective of technical works elucidating an array of religious doctrine, prayers, and practical directives outlining the requisite activities for ritual performance. It is among these revelatory materials that much of the evidence concerning rites for the dead and dying in Tibet can be located. The preeminence of the ritual context of death-related *gter-ma* and of Tibetan religious literature in general has remained widely ignored by scholars in the field. On this point, Yael Bentor's recent remark about the role of ritual in Tibet deserves to be highlighted and repeated:

> "Ritual texts constitute a significant part of nearly every Tibetan library. Furthermore, in the majority of Tibetan monasteries the performance of rituals is

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[21] See, for example, B1, fols. 197-202; B2, fols. 15b.2-16b.2; B4, 6fols..; B5, 2fols.; CH, fols. 747-750; DH, fols. 455-466; GK, fols. 27-32; S3, 1f.; T3, 5f., 9p; T6, fols. 1-8. The text found in editions B1, B4, DH, T3 was composed by the controversial treasure revealer from Khams, Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (1647-1710). The work in edition GK, representing the Sga-rje Khams-gzhung tradition of the present Khams-sprul 'Jam-dbyangs-don-grub, was written by the Kaḥ-thog master, Stag-bla Padma-mati (1591-1647), student of 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po (1585-1656) and teacher of the Fifth Dalai Lama's Rnying-ma master, Chos-dbyings-rang-grol (1604-1669).

the principal undertaking of most monks. Even in monastic educational institutions monks devote part of their time to rituals. It should be emphasized that almost all forms of Tibetan meditation are highly ritualized and therefore fall within this category as well. Western scholarship, however, has not yet adequately reflected this Tibetan preoccupation with ritual."[22]

The Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* cycle offers an extensive variety of ritual literature presented largely within the context of a generation phase (*bskyed-rim*) tantric system that conjoins the Rdzogs-chen theory of the bardo with a visualized mandala inhabited by a group of one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-ba dang khro-bo'i-lha-tshogs*). As previously noted in Chapter 1, this *Zhi-khro* mandala was probably derived from the central Mahāyoga scripture, *Guhyagarbha-mahātantra* (*Gsang-ba'i snying-po*). The stages in the cultivation of the mandala are detailed in the liturgical texts known as *sgrub-thabs* (*sādhana*), "methods for accomplishment" (2a). Among the sādhana-s of the Kar-gling *gter-ma* there are three which are repeatedly mentioned in the colophons and commentarial literature as preeminent—their importance reflected also in the great frequency with which they appear in the various printed editions. They are:

1. *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* [*Religious Liturgy of the Self-Liberation of Karmic Latencies*][23]

2. *Zhi-khro'i las-byang tshor-ba rang-grol gsum* [*Three-fold Self-Liberation of Feeling: Practice Manual of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*][24]

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[22]Bentor 1996, p. 290.

[23]Contained in B1, fols. 263-283; B1a, fols. 267-317; B2, fols. 123b.3-134b.6; B4; CH, fols. 25-74; DH, fols. 7-57; GK, fols. 195-227; KS, fols. 147-169; NE; PY, fols. 305-338; RB; S1, fols. 173-211; S3; T2; T3; T4, fols. 5a.1-47a.2; T5; T6, fols. 363-397, T7, vol. 1, fols. 169-197.6; T8, vol. 2, fols. 353-386; ZH, fols. 357-388. Translated in Thurman 1994, pp. 205-225.

[24]Only two of the three works appear to be extant: the *Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol* (in CH, fols. 85-238; GK, fols. 75-144, 453-491; NE; PY, fols. 61-150, 351-356; T5; T6, fols. 61-177; T7, vol. 1, fols. 233-325; T8, vol. 1, fols. 59-161; and ZH, fols. 33-130); and the *Las-byang chung-ba tshor-ba rang-grol snying-po* (in B3, fols. 3-23; CH, fols. 239-284; GK, fols. 243-265,

3. *Zhi-khro'i klong-bshags brjod-pa rang-grol* [*Self-Liberation of Speech: Confession to the Expanse of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*][25]

The *Zhi-khro* sādhana, as represented in these three ritual works, lies at the very heart of the Kar-gling liturgical tradition, although suprisingly this has never been properly acknowledged. In this specialized ritual context, where a distinctively Rdzogs-chen conception of bardo provides the principal frame of reference, the *Zhi-khro* sādhana guides the efforts of the deceased to visualize the mandala of one hundred deities and to recall the appropriate *mantras* and *mudrās* during the transition between lives. In more elaborate presentations, the *Zhi-khro* sādhana serves as the foundation of a program designed explicitly to re-orient the dead and to assist them in the recollection of previous religious instruction, all aimed at protecting against fear (*'jigs-skyobs*) and liberating from the dangerous pathways of the bardo (*bar-do 'phrang-sgrol*). As we shall demonstrate below, the sādhana that is the basis of the Kar-gling ritual, and thus of greatest practical importance to the tradition as a whole, is without doubt the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*. The other two works listed above are in many respects simply supplements to this principal text. Although a few studies have carried passing references to the *Bag-chags rang-grol*, it has yet to attract the attention it deserves.[26]

Curiously enough, the fifth Dalai Lama in his categorization of the various Kar-gling sādhana includes two titles which we would not expect to find listed there. We might instead, for obvious reasons, look for the titles under a more appropriate heading, such as

509-517; NE; PY, fols. 417-440, 451-461; S3; T5; T6, fols. 179-204, 353-361; T7, vol. 1, fols. 327-353; T8, vol. 2, fols. 5-38; and ZH, fols. 135-161). The former was probably redacted in the mid-fifteenth century by Nyi-zla-'od-zer.

[25]This text can be categorized both as a sādhana and as a expiation and confession work (*bskang-bshags*). It is contained in B1, fols. 215-238; B1a, fols. 349-395; B2, fols. 31b.5-43b.3; B4; B5; CH, fols. 371-422; DH, fols. 491-537; GK, fols. 383-422; KS, fols. 168.11-192; NE; PY, fols. 265-303; RB; S1, fols. 282-324; S3; T3; T5; T6, fols. 254-293; T7, vol. 1, fols. 397-429; T8, vol. 1, fols. 291-328; ZH, fols. 297-332.

[26]See, for example, the brief references in Back 1987, p. 9 and Blezer 1997, pp. 34n.155 and 65.

thos-grol, "liberation upon hearing". These are the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i ngo-sprod gsal-'debs thos-grol chen-mo* [*Great Liberation upon Hearing: Recollection of the Direct Introduction to the Bardo of Reality*] and the *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod gsal-'debs thos-grol chen-mo* [*Great Liberation upon Hearing: Recollection of the Direct Introduction to the Bardo of Becoming*].[27] Although there is always the possibility that the texts which were familiar to the fifth Dalai Lama are not the same texts that we have today, we can be fairly certain that these titles refer to an earlier version of two texts widely renowned and universally accepted as constituting the quintessence of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*—or at the very least of the version that has come down to us in translation as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. But, in no other source do we find these texts identified as sādhana, so why does the fifth Dalai Lama categorize them as such? And if indeed they are sādhana, then what sort of text can we call *thos-grol*? I think the answer to the first question is simple. The *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* appeared to the fifth Dalai Lama to be nothing more or less than texts that provided a "means for achieving" (*sgrub-thabs*) visualization of a prescribed mandala during the interval between this and the next life. In other words, the two texts were seen as sādhana-s. This answer, no doubt, would further confirm my statement above that the *Zhi-khro* sādhana is the very backbone of the Kar-gling liturgy. As for the second question, we will attempt to answer it in our discussion below.

The vast majority of Kar-gling texts remaining in the category of liturgy are devoted to the standard generation phase practices involving the bestowal of initiations (*dbang-bskur*), recitation of mantra (*'dzab-bzlas, bsnyen*), offerings of ritual cakes (*gtor-'bul*), rites of confession and the expiation of broken vows (*bskang-bshags nyams-chag*), and

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[27]DL, fol. 88.

burnt offerings (*sbrin-sreg*).[28] One category, however, stands out as being especially significant with respect to the funeral rites accompanying the Kar-gling literature; namely, the ceremony for guiding the deceased to a favorable destiny (*tshe-'das gnas-'dren*). In the previous chapter we saw that the concept of soul-guidance was a familiar component of the Tibetan worldview prior to the influx of Buddhism and persisted in Tibetan Buddhist rites for the dead. Rituals to "show the way" (*lam-bstan*) were thus derived from very ancient beliefs. But these indigenous ideas were not the only source of the later rites. Equivalent concepts can also be found in the early Buddhist literature. Recall, for example, Tun-huang manuscript PT 239/I where we found evidence of a ritual for the dead designed to guarantee safe passage upward to the divine residence of Buddha Vajrapāṇi. Here, it was apparent that this early text drew its inspiration from the purification rituals of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra*. Similarly, the later guidance texts of the *Zhi-khro* cycle—identified as auxiliaries (*cha-lag*) of the confession and expiation literature[29] —seem also to have been derived from the very same source.[30] In the Kar-gling collections, the exemplary work of this type would have to be the elusive *Tshe-'das gnas-'dren 'gro-drug rang-grol* [*Self-Liberation of the Six Classes of Beings, Guiding the Deceased to a Higher State*]. I say "elusive" because although a number of supplements to this work exist in the collection (the majority of which were composed in the seventeenth century by Karma-chags-med),[31] the actual text has not been located.[32]

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[28]For an excellent and unprecedented examination of the use of these components in Tibetan ritual, see Beyer 1978.

[29]See for instance, the *Na-rag bskang-bshags nyams-chag rang-grol-gyi cha-lag tshe-'das 'gro-drug rang-grol-gyi zin-bris*, a liturgical supplement by Karma-chags-med (1613-1678) composed in 1665. In GK, fols. 849-939 (alternate title found in PY, fols. 585-685; T5; and T8, vol. 1, fols. 391-471).

[30]Blezer 1997, p. 59.

[31]On whom see Chapter 4.

[32]It may be possible, however, to reconstruct part of the text based on passages quoted in the exegetical literature. Perhaps the short work entitled *Tshe-'das gnas-'dren bsdus-pa* contains elements of an earlier version, but since the text was later redacted by Karma-chags-med it is probably more representative of the seventeenth century than it is of the fourteenth. See PY, fols. 553-583; S3; and T5. A similar title—*Tshe-'das gnas-'dren rigs-drug rang-grol*—is found in the *gsan-yig* of the Fifth Dalai Lama (DL, fol. 88.4). Unfortunately, without the text in hand it is not possible to determine whether or not this a reference to the same work.

We emphasized at the end of Chapter 1 that the guidance ritual (*gnas-'dren cho-ga*) is also aimed at purifying the sins (*sdig-sgrib*) of the departed in order to clear a path for them in the bardo after death. This is accomplished through the rite of confession (*bshags-pa*) and reconciliation (*bskang-ba*) (2d). Such ritual activity draws on common Buddhist themes of karmic cleansing as extensions of life practices that are in general directed toward purification of the deceased and preparation for the afterlife. These practices carry with them the sense that every sin has its antidote, and evils not atoned for in life will have to be expiated after death. The prototype is represented by the ritual of cremating the corpse (*ro-sreg-gi cho-ga*) outlined in the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana*. There the officiant is required to generate through visualization a mandala inhabited by wrathful deities. By means of a series of consecrations (*dbang-bskur*) he is expected to transform the corpse into the exalted body of the central deity. Through recitation of the specified *mantras* and the gestures of the appropriate *mudrās*, all past sins and transgressions are gradually burned off and the deceased is ultimately delivered to the higher realm of the gods.[33] A similar program is at work in the confession texts of the Kar-gling tradition, only in this context emphasis is largely on the purification of the deceased's "soul" or consciousness, rather than on the corpse. The deceased is purified through initiation into the complete *Zhi-khro* mandala and through respectful homage (*gus-pas phyag-'tshal-ba*) to each of its inhabitants. The two most exemplary confession texts of the *Zhi-khro* cycle are:

1. *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol* [*Self-Liberation of Broken Vows through Expiation and Confession*]

[33]See the translation of the running commentary by Vajravarman in Skorupski 1983, pp. 81-87, notes 16-33.

2. *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol* [*One Hundred Prostrations: The Self-Liberation of Sin and Defilement*][34]

The *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol* does not exist as an independent text in any of the existing recensions of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* collection, although there are a number of supplemental materials related to it, the earliest being two fifteenth-century works attributed to Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.[35] From the colophons of the second exemplary work, the *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol*—perhaps the only surviving work from Karma-gling-pa's lost cycle *Thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro*[36]—we learn that this text is considered an auxiliary (*cha-lag*) of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, a facilitating tool (*cha-rkyen*) of the *Na-rag bskang-bshags* [*Avoiding Hell through Expiation and Confession*], and the epitome (*don-'dus*) of the *Zhi-khro las-byang gsum*.[37] Altogether the expiation and confession texts are a fundamental component of the Kar-gling ritual program.

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[34]See B1a, fols. 319-348; B2, fols. 22b.4-30b.2; B5; CH, fols. 329-360; DH, fols. 563-592; GK, fols. 343-369; KS, fols. 131-146; NE; PY, fols. 229-252; RB; S1, fols. 254-281; S3; T5; T6, fols. 227-252.3; T7, vol. 1, fols. 369-390; T8, vol. 2, fols. 39-62; ZH, fols. 267-289.

[35]This is (1) the *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol-gyi-thugs-dam bskang-ba'i-rim-pa* (in CH, fols. 461-512; GK, fols. 499-501, 551-594; NE; PY, fols. 487-514, 525-540; S3; T5; T6, fols. 295-332; T7, vol. 1, fols. 431-465; T8, vol. 1, fols. 329-376; and ZH, fols. 227-263), and (2) the *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol-gyi-sngon-'gro lhan-thabs* (see GK, fols. 53-72 and T7, vol. 1, fols. 217-232).

[36]See note 4 above. An Italian translation of the *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol* is included in Tucci 1972, pp. 187-205.

[37]See B1a, fols. 346.3-347.3; B5; CH, fols. 359.5-360.4; DH, fols. 590.3-591.3; GK, fol. 368.3-6; KS, pp. 145.19-146.10; NE; PY, fols. 251.6-252.4; S1, fols. 280.5-281.6; S3; T5; T6, fols. 251.5-252.3; T7, vol. 1, fol. 390.1-5; T8, vol. 2, fols. 61.6-62.5; ZH, fols. 288.4-289.4: *zhes pa rnal 'byor mched lcam du yod kun : gcer bur phyungs te rkyang phyag gus pas 'tshal : ngag gis tshig dbyangs snyan pos bstod byas nas : yid kyis dus gsum bsags pa'i sdig sgrib rnams : gnong 'gyod tshul gyis brga phyag gus bar 'tshal : zhi khro'i lha phyag brgya dang bcur longs pa'i : sgrib sbyongs khyang 'phags sdig sgrib rang grol 'di : na rag bskang bshags la sogs gang byed kyang : 'di bzhin byas pa'i bsod nams tshad las 'das : de phyir brgya phyag 'di la rab tu 'bad : zhi khro dam pa rigs brgya'i brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : bar do thos grol gyi cha lag : na rag bskang bshags kyi cha rkyen : zhi khro las byang gsum gyi don 'dus : shin tu zab par bstan pa 'di ni : kun la spel zhing dus gsum ma chag par brtson par gyis shig.*

3. Liberation upon Hearing

One of the prophecies reported in Rgya-ra-ba's history, the *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, concerning the concealment of the *Zhi-khro* treasures, relates that Padmasambhava was asked by several prominent individuals, including the likes of the emperor Khri-srong-lde-btsan and the translator Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan, for secret instructions on a swift and powerful method for liberating oneself in a single lifetime without any effort whatsoever. Padmasambhava responded by offering a teaching which he claimed was so effective that it could shut the gates to the lower realms simply by being heard (*thos-pa tsam-gyis ngan-song-gi skye-sgo gcod-pa*).[38] This is alluded to in a passage from the *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*:

> "This great liberation upon hearing (*thos-grol chen-mo*) is a teaching that awakens expansively (*sangs-rgyas*) without meditation, a teaching that liberates just by being heard, a teaching that guides great sinners along the secret path, a profound teaching that differentiates (*bye-brag phyed-pa*) and thoroughly enlightens in an instant, such that those sentient beings whom it reaches cannot possibly go to the lower realms."[39]

This was the doctrine concealed in writing by Padmasambhava and uncovered six centuries later on Sgam-po-gdar mountain by the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa. We know, and have known for some time, that these ancient instructions, guaranteed to "liberate upon hearing" (*thos-grol*), came to encapsulate the very essence of the Kar-gling

[38]LGNB, fol. 38: *kye mnga' bdag rgyal po yab sras rje slon rnams kyi thugs bzhed ltar / dpal kun tu bzang po'i dgongs pa mngon du byung ba rdzogs pa chen po'i rgyud 'bum phrag drug cu rtsa bzhi'i gnad 'gag gcig tu dril nas thos pa tsam gyis ngan song gi skye sgo gcod pa / go ba tsam gyis bde chen gyi sa la bshegs pa / don yid la byed pa rnams ni lhun gyis grub pa'i rig 'dzin phyir mi ldog pa'i sa la gshegs par byed pa.*

[39]B1a, fols. 89.5-90.2: *thos grol chen mo 'di ni ma bsgom par* [90] *sangs rgyas pa'i chos thos pa tsam gyis grol ba thob pa'i chos : sdig po che gsang lam la 'khrid pa'i chos : skad cig gcig gis bye brag phyed pa'i chos : skad cig gcig gis rdzogs sangs rgyas pa'i chos zab mo yin te : 'dis sleb pa'i sems can ngan song du song ba mi srid do.*

discoveries. The specific texts that our Tibetan sources have uniformly categorized as exemplary of the *thos-grol* genre, however, do not always offer as easy a method as that promised by Padmasambhava. On the contrary, the vast majority of the identified *thos-grol* works are drawn from a highly refined category referred to as *ngo-sprod*, or "direct personal introduction". Typically the texts of this genre contain advanced religious instruction imparted by a tantric master to a qualifed student as an unmediated introduction to the expert techniques of a given doctrinal or liturgical tradition. "Hearing" (*thos-pa*) in this case refers more to a disciple's recognition through *listening* to the instructions of the teacher (and in this sense the term comes to mean "to study" or "to learn") than it does through passively *hearing* the words of a text.[40] Nevertheless, it would appear that two categories of *thos-grol* literature exist. The first is this esoteric brand of yogic instruction, the *ngo-sprod*, while the second is a more mundane and hence more easily accessible form of practice, namely devotional prayer (*smon-lam*).

The exemplary work of the first type is the *Rdzogs-rim bar-do drug-gi khrid-yig* [*Completion Stage Guidebook to the Six Intermediate States*],[41] which is actually comprised of six smaller instruction manuals (*khrid-yig*) each devoted to one of the six bardos. This intriguing set of yogic teachings draws heavily upon the Snying-thig of the Rdzogs-chen tradition and presupposes a knowledge of "breakthrough" (*khregs-chod*) and "direct transcendence" (*thod-rgal*) practice.[42] Although the *Bar-do drug-khrid* is accepted as an original revealed work of Karma-gling-pa, its colophon might lead us to believe otherwise. The fact that the fifteenth-century lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer is the only disciple explicitly named as recipient of the text's pure transmission leading back through

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[40]This evokes the standard trio of study (*thos-pa*), reflection (*bsam-pa*), and meditation (*sgom-pa*)—the three activities required for mastery of any religious instruction.
[41]T7, vol. 2, fols. 303-432. Recently translated in Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 83-273.
[42]Instructions for "breakthrough" meditation are contained largely in book three of the *Rdzogs-rim bar-do drug-gi khrid-yig*, while the techniques of "direct transcendence" are the subject of book five. For descriptions of these practices in the secondary literature, see Germano 1994, esp. pp. 286-296.

a singular and unbroken stream suggests that the anthology as we know it today may actually have been compiled by this third holder of Karma-gling-pa's lineage.[43] Before him we would have expected at least to have seen first one of the names of either the father Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas or the son Nyi-zla-chos-rje since they are usually listed in that order—but this is not the case here. It would appear then that we have two choices for interpretation: either the later tradition viewed Nyi-zla-'od-zer as carrying a special connection to the *khrid-yig* text, and thus only listed his name as the first holder of its transmission; or Nyi-zla-'od-zer had himself been responsible for the text's redaction. It may be relevant to mention also that Nyi-zla-'od-zer is the known author of a detailed outline, the only one of its kind, for this specific set of *Bar-do khrid-yig* texts, the *Sa-bcad lde-mig rang-grol* [*Self-Liberated Key: A Topical Outline*].[44] We will have more to say about Nyi-zla-'od-zer and his role in the dissemination of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma* in the next chapter.

Among other possibly significant examples of the *ngo-sprod* variety, we should mention again the two texts *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar'do-'i ngo-sprod*. As noted, these texts were not identified by the fifth Dalai Lama as belonging to the classification *ngo-sprod*, despite being labelled as such in their titles. They were, instead, identified as *dbang-sgrub* (this classification, we argued above, was not entirely inappropriate). But then *ngo-sprod* was not included as a possible choice in the fifth Dalai Lama's scheme; the classification *thos-grol* was, however, but again the titles were put under a different label. Until we can locate and consult the actual texts available to the fifth Dalai Lama, his rationale may be forever lost to history. It is certainly noteworthy that in the *gsan-yig* of Gter-bdag-gling-pa the texts of the *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do*

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[43]See, for example, T7, vol. 2, fol. 432.1-2: *grub thob karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas bton pa'o / gcig brgyud du byas nas / guru nyi zla 'od zer la zab chos 'di'i bdag por bka' babs pa'o.* .

[44]In T7, vol. 2, fols. 255-265.

are categorized as *ngo-sprod*.[45] Were the texts known to the fifth Dalai Lama really all that categorically different from those familiar to his contemporaries, or did he have some alternative understanding of the structure and purpose of these works? Whatever the case, the later indices of Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal and Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che corroborate Gter-bdag-gling-pa's classification.[46] The texts as we know them today, although based upon sādhana, can be easily viewed as "direct personal introduction" to crucial doctrines described therein. The authoritative and self-conscious voice of the narrative takes the place of the absent teacher, and like a teacher it conveys important religious instruction to the frightened student who wanders aimlessly in the bardo.

> "O son of good family (*kye rigs-kyi bu*),[47] if you do not know how meditate in this way, then be mindful of the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, and the Lord of Great Compassion [Mahākarūṇa], and pray to them. Meditate on all frightening and terrifying visions as the Lord of Great Compassion, or as your own tutelary deity (*yi-dam*). Remember your lamas and whatever initiation names you received in the human world, and do not fear the Dharmarāja, Lord of the Dead."[48]

In addition to the advanced *ngo-sprod* manuals there is the second classification of *thos-grol* literature, the customary *smon-lam*, or "aspiration-prayer", which has come to form a type of appendix to the standard collection of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. This category is best exemplied by the *Bar-do'i smon-lam rnam-gsum* [*Triad of Bardo*

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[45]TLSY, fol. 390.2-4.

[46]See ZD, fol. 511.4 and DJ, fols. 179.6-180.1

[47]On this common Buddhist expression (Skt., *kalaputra*), see Schopen 1997, p. 117.

[48]*Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, B1a, fol. 165.1-4: *kyai rigs kyi bu : de ltar sgom ma shes na : sangs rgyas dang : chos dang : dge 'dun dang : thugs rje chen po rnams dran par gyis la gsol ba thob cig : 'jigs skrag gi snang ba thams cad thugs rje chen po'am : khyod rang gi yi dam du sgoms shig : mi yul du dbang gang zhus pa'i mtshan dang : bal ma dran par gyis la gshin rje chos kyi rgyal po la ma zhed cig.*

Prayers]—*Bar-do drug-gi rtsa-tshig* [*Root Verses on the Six Bardos*],[49] *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam* [*Prayer for Deliverance from the Perilous Straits of the Bardo*],[50] and *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma* [*Bardo Prayer that Protects from Fear*].[51] With the addition of the *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam* [*Prayer Requesting the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for Assistance*],[52] these short devotional works represent a cohesive set of prayers which have been uniformly grouped together and incorporated into almost every manuscript and facsimile edition of the Kar-gling cycle. In addition, many of the verses are found deeply embedded in the body of some of the larger works, e.g., the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* and *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs*, indicating the persistence of possibly older layers of ritual expression in newer liturgical books. I strongly suspect that the prayers actually constitute the nucleus of the *thos-grol* teachings, and that the more expansive texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* were in fact derived from them. More than likely, the *Bar-do thos-grol* as we know it today represents the culmination of a gradual process of extension and elaboration upon an earlier and basic stock of prayers intended for practical use in some preexisting funeral liturgy, such as that outlined in the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana-tantra*

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[49]See B1, fols. 60-62; B1a, fols. 129-133; B2, fols. 95a.3-96a.2; B4; B5; DH, fols. 179-183; GK, fols. 233.4-236.3; KS, fols. 113.6-115.1; NE; PY, fols. 341.2-343-6; RB; S1, fols. 218.4-221.4; T3; T4, fols. 50b.2-53a.3; T5; T6, fols. 403.6-407.1; T8, vol. 2, fols. 387-389; and ZH. Translated in Evans-Wentz 1927, pp. 199-202; Fremantle & Trungpa 1975, pp. 100-102; Thurman 1994, pp. 108-111; Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 286-291.

[50]See B1, fols. 63-66; B1a, fols. 135-141; B2, fols. 96a.2-97a.4; B4; B5; DH, fols. 185-191; GK, fols. 236.3-239.4; KS, fols. 115.2-117.2; PY, fols. 343.6-346.4; RB; S1, fols. 221.4-224.5; T3, T4; fols. 53a.3-58a.2; T5; T6, fols. 407.1-411.2; T7, vol. 3; T8, vol. 2, fols. 389-393; and ZH. Translated in Evans-Wentz 1927, pp. 202-205; Fremantle & Trungpa 1975, pp. 98-99; Thurman 1994, pp. 115-116; and, Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 277-286.

[51]See B1, fols. 126-128; B1a, fols. 261-266; B2, fols. 94a.1-95a.2; B4; B5; DH, fols. 313-319; GK, fols. 239.5-242; KS, fols. 117.3-119; NE; PY, fols. 346.4-350; S1, fols. 224.5-228; T3; T4, fols. 58a.2-61a.3; T5; T6, fols. 411.2-416; T7, vol. 3; T8, vol. 2, fols. 393-395; and ZH. Translated in Evans-Wentz 1927 pp. 205-208; Fremantle & Trungpa 1975, pp. 103-105; Thurman 1994, pp. 112-114; and, Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 291-295.

[52]B1, fols. 57-59; B1a, fols. 123-127; B2, fols. 43b.3-44b.1; B4; B5; DH, fols. 173-177; GK, fols. 229-233; KS, fols. 111-113.5; NE; PY, fols. 338.4-341.2; RB; S1, fols. 213-218.4; T3; T4, fols. 47a.5-50.1; T5; T6, fols. 399-403; T7, vol. 1, fols. 197.6-200; T7, vol. 3, fols. 315-327; and ZH, fols. 389-400. Translated in Evans-Wentz 1927 pp. 197-198; Fremantle & Trungpa 1975, pp. 96-97; Thurman 1994, pp. 105-107; Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 296-297.

or as backdrop to Tun-huang manuscript PT 239. The collective aim of these prayers was, and still is, straightforward and uncomplicated: to provide comfort and assistance to the deceased believed to be suffering from confusion, fear and anxiety during the chaos of the transition between lives.

4. Liberation upon Wearing

The texts of the category *btags-grol*, or "liberation upon wearing" are expressive of the long-standing Tibetan faith in the book as a physical embodiment of sacred power which, among many other advantages, can protect against death and evil influence. In the Kar-gling literature, the *btags-grol* predominantly consist of mantras designed to be carried in one form or another on the body. The mantras can be printed on small pieces of paper, folded, and placed in an amulet (*ga'u*) or sewn into cloth and worn around the neck. Alternatively, the text can also be attached to the corpse prior to cremation. Placed over the heart it is believed that when the text is consumed with the body in the funeral pyre, the deceased's sins are burned away and the frightening appearances of the bardo do not arise.[53] The exemplary text of this type is the *Btags-grol phung-po rang-grol* [*The Self-Liberation of the Body: Liberation upon Wearing*].[54]

5. Path of Means

"Path of means" (*thabs-lam*) refers to a distinct type of practical method corresponding to the completion phase (*rdzogs-rim*) of tantric practice, in which special yogic techniques are employed that require the manipulation of sexual energies. In the specific context of the Kar-gling teachings, this path is pursued by those superior

[53]Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 136n.1 and 192n.4; Tenga Rinpoche 1996, p. 11.
[54]See B1, fols. 102-125; B1a, fols. 213-260; B2, fols. 105b.4-117b.5; B4; DH, fols. 263-311; T3; and T7, vol. 3, fols. 255-286.

practitioners intent on "closing the entrance to the womb" (*mngal-sgo 'gag-pa*) via the "four joys" (*dga'-ba bzhi*).[55] As noted in Chapter 1, the concept of closing the womb entrance appears to have been one of the hallmarks of the tantric reinterpretation of earlier *antarābhava* formulations, as for example we witness in the *Garbhāvakrānti-nirdeśa-sūtra*. The specialized form of this technique, involving the generation of the "four joys", is usually accomplished through employing the services of a qualifed female consort. According to the *Srid-pa bar-do'i khrid-yig* [*Guidebook to the Intermediate State of Becoming*], the principal goal of such practice is to develop direct experience of the pristine wisdom (*ye-shes*) of the four types of bliss (*bde-ba bzhi*), so that at the moment when the consciousness descending toward a new birth perceives the future mother and father in passionate embrace, the true wisdom nature of the parents' sexual excitement will be recognized and rebirth will be avoided.

> "If you do not apprehend [the pristine wisdom-bliss] there [in the bardo of reality-itself], then in the bardo of becoming, upon seeing a male and female having sex, you will apprehend the wisdom of unconditioned coemergent joy, the pristine wisdom of the bliss [associated with] the third initiation.[56] Then, the entrance to the womb will be closed and you will surely be liberated in the bardo."[57]

[55]The four joys: (1) joy (*sga'-ba*), (2) supreme joy (*mchog-dga'*), (3) transcendant joy (*dga'-bral-gyi dga'-ba*), and (4) coemergent joy (*lhan-cig skyes-pa'i dga'-ba*). For a detailed description, see G. Gyatso 1982, pp. 66-99.

[56]Generally, the third initiation is called "secret initiation" (*gsang-dbang*) involving sexual yoga and the ritual exchange of sexual fluids. In the Kar-gling tradition, as presented by the fifteenth-century lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer, this particular initiation is called "pristine wisdom initiation" (*ye-shes dbang*) and is said to culminate in the purification of mental defilements (*yid-sgrib dag*). See *Gsangs-sngags rdo-rje theg-pa'i chos-spyod thun-bzhi'i rnal-'byor sems-nyid rang-grol*, T8, vol. 1, fols. 18.4-19.4.

[57]T7, vol. 2, fols. 426.6-427.1: *der yang ngos ma zin na srid pa bar dor : pho mo chags pa spyod pa mthong ma zag lhan cig skye pa'i dga' ba'i ye shes dbang gsum bde ba'i ye shes ngos zin nas : mngal sgo khegs nas nges par bar dor grol te.*

The scenario of the Oedipal descent into a womb alluded to here is essentially identical to that described in Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* with one fundamental difference. In this tantric scenario there is an advanced mechanism at work that makes it possible for the descending consciousness to stop its momentum and essentially to reverse the rebirth process. That technique—generally referred to as *thabs-lam*—was not a method available to the early followers of the Abhidharma. Among the texts of this category in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* cycle, the most important appear to be two works authored by the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer; namely, the *'Og-sgo bde-chen 'dod-chags rang-grol-gyis nyams-khrid* [*The Self-Liberation of Desire: Experiential Guiding Instructions on the Great Bliss of the Lower Orifice*][58] and its supplement, the *Bde-ba rang-grol* [*The Self-Liberation of Bliss*].[59]

6. Religious Protectors

The texts concerned with the *bstan-srung*, "religious protectors"—also, *chos-skyong*, "dharma protectors"—provide generally the requisite details for the performance of a type of invocation liturgy belonging to a class of generation phase sādhana practice. The general purpose of the ceremony is to invoke the power of specific deities who have been bound by oath (*dam-can*) to guard a particular set of religious teachings against evil influence.[60] The history of these defenders of religion is the epic tale of the conversion through subjugation of Tibet's indigenous demonic forces to the divine laws of Buddhism.[61] In many cases we also find evidence of the iconographic assimilation of Indian divinities, as we see below. According to Tibetan legend derived from written

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[58]T7, vol. 3, fols. 329-419.
[59]T7, vol. 3, fols. 439-481.
[60]The protective deities are discussed at length in René de Nebesky-Wojkowitz's pioneering and largely underappreciated classic *Oracles and Demons of Tibet* (1956); cf. also Heller 1990; Ladrang Kalsang 1996; Pommaret 1996; Blondeau 1998.
[61]See Samuel 1993, pp. 167-170; Dowman 1997, pp. 18-31.

sources such as O-rgyan-gling-pa's fourteenth-century *Bka'-thang sde-lnga* [*Five Chronicles*],[62] these special guardians had once been the wild and unruly spirits of the earth known to us perhaps in the cosmologies of the ancient Yang-gsang The'u-rang and Grags-pa Bon traditions. When Buddhism began to spread in Tibet, these local deities (*yul-lha, gzhi-bdag*) fought viciously against the new religion. We may recall that it was for the purpose of taming these hostile spirits that the Indian exorcist Padmasambhava was invited to Tibet.

In the context of the great *gter-ma* traditions, these subjugated spirits, known subsequently as *gter-srung*, or "treasure defenders" are contacted in ritual and bound to its service. In the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* tradition, in particular, there are a number of liturgical texts devoted to these powerful protectors—perhaps the earliest and most important text being Rgya-ra-ba's redaction of the *Bka'-srung dam-can sde-bdun chos-skyong kun-'dus-kyi bskang gdug-pa rang-grol* [*The Self-Liberation of Poisons: Requests for Expiation to the Assembly of All the Dharma Protectors of the Seven Classes of Oath-Bound Defenders*].[63] This work ennumerates seven groups of religious protector:

1. The father class of glorious protectors and masters of the treasure (*gter-bdag dpal mgon-ma ning pho-rgyud*)
2. The mother class of female protectors of mantra, including Ekajāti and the deep purple mother goddesses of pristine wisdom (*sngags srung-mo rgyud, smug-nag ye-shes ma-mo*)[64]
3. The mother goddesses of karma led by Remati (*lha-mo ma-mo, las-kyi ma-mo*)[65]

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[62]See Blondeau 1971 and 1987.
[63]See CH, fols. 513-526; GK, fols. 609-618; NE; PY, fols. 541-551; T5; T6, fols. 332-345; T7, vol. 3, fols. 491-498; T8, vol. 1, fols. 379-388; and ZH, fols. 215-223.
[64]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, p. 33.
[65]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 31-33.

4. The life-force attaining butchers, including the four classes of karmic murderers (*srog-sgrub bshan-pa, srog-gcod sde-bzhi las-byed*)[66]
5. The eight classes of planetary demons, including Rāhula and the eight classes of planet-faced constellation envoys (*gza'-bdud sde-brgyad, gza'-gdong sde-brgyad rgyu-skar pho-nya*)[67]
6. Rdo-rje-legs-pa and the bewitching *btsan* demons, including the servants of the *btsan* and the *brtan-ma* goddesses (*rdor-legs btsan-'gong, btsan dang brtan-ma'i g.yog*)[68]
7. The four classes of red butcher mountain demons (*bshan-dmar gnod-sbyin, bshan-pa srog-gcod tshogs sde-bzhi*)[69]

In addition to this colorful collection of deities other sources refer also to the famous "brotherhood of warrior gods" (*dgra-lha-mched*).[70] The mythology surrounding the Tibetan protective divinities is extremely complex, and a thorough study of their role in Tibetan religion is much needed. It is strikingly evident even in the oldest texts accompanying the rites of the Kar-gling tradition that these powerful and ambivalent forces played active and profound roles in the *Zhi-khro* liturgy.

2. THE CORE STRUCTURE

An analysis of the contents of the various recensions of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* reveals, in the words of Janet Gyatso,

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[66]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, p. 92
[67]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 259-263.
[68]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 154-159 and 181-198.
[69]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, p. 92.
[70]Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, pp. 318-340.

> "....that successive textual layers exist, amongst which we can often recognize a text or texts that seem to be intended to represent the revelatory teaching as such. We may consider these texts as the "visionary core" of the cycle. They are similar to the *mūla* or *kārikā* genres of Indic literature in that they are the referents of the commentaries and subsidiary rituals in the visionary system."[71]

Here, according to Gyatso's definition, the core text can be viewed as a sort of "primary visionary document", meaning that it can be thought of as "a kind of transcription of the actual revelation."[72] In this regard, the core text is believed to contain the original and fundamental teachings of the concealed treasure. Gyatso continues:

> "Such visionary core texts are almost always anonymous. The core text may be labeled in a variety of ways. Often versified, it is in some cases a separate text, in others an embedded passage. In the Discovered Treasure literature, the visionary core will be a separate item called the Treasure Book (*gter gzhung*). This is usually a short aphoristic or laconic text which lays out the spiritual authority for the Discovered Treasure of which it is a part, and outlines a particular philosophy or meditative system."[73]

From among the texts of the Kar-gling collection, the work that best approximates the type of "Treasure Book" described by Gyatso may be the terse *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol* [*Direct Introduction to Awareness: Self-Liberation through Naked Vision*] which has been the subject of several western-language studies.[74] In the modern

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[71]Gyatso 1991, p. 100.
[72]Gyatso 1993, p. 109.
[73]Gyatso 1991, p. 100.
[74]The Tibetan text can be found in B1, fols. 156-170; B1a, fols. 367-426; B4, no. 11; DH, fols. 373-402; T3, no. 10; T7, vol. 2, fols. 479-488. As for the main secondary literature, see Evans-Wentz 1968, pp. 202-240; Back 1987; Reynolds 1989; Ehrhard 1990, esp. pp. 122-125, notes 140, 143, and 146; Thurman 1994, pp. 227-242. On the so-called *rig-pa gcer-mthong* tradition of Bon Rdzogs-chen, see Achard 1998. It is peculiar that Achard makes no reference to the Buddhist *gter-ma* of the same name.

facsimile editions it is generally included among the texts of the famed *Bar-do thos-grol*, and scholars have tended to treat it as the theoretical basis of the concepts contained in that cycle.[75] The *Rig-pa ngo-sprod* is attributed explicitly to Padmasambhava, who is said to have concealed it in the standard fashion for the benefit of future generations. The text offers in nine-syllable verse a rather brief poetic description of the "view" (*lta-ba*) of the Rdzogs-chen philosophical tradition. As noted on several occasions, it is from this specialized tradition that the *gter-ma* of Karma-gling-pa derives its conceptual focus. Still, although it may be true that the *Rig-pa ngo-sprod* epitomizes the doctrinal foundation of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, and in turn also of the larger text cycle *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*—and so, in this light, can be suitably viewed as the "root" text per se—I do not have a sense that this text is the most fundamental in terms of being the historically earliest document, or even in practical terms the central text around which the later supplemental literature revolves. Whatever the case may be, at least on the issue of chronology, the absence of verifiable data means that my speculation here must necessarily remain tentative and may have to be modified, or even rejected, as possible further evidence is introduced. The important point is that we should attempt to make a finer distinction between what "core" might mean in the present context.

In the following discussion I wish to make clear that for our purposes the label "core text" (*gzhung-rtsa*) is descriptive of two categories of literature. The first type is best expressed by what Gyatso has termed "ancient writing" (*yig-rnying*) and covers "a range of literary genres which can function as core texts, including *sādhana-s* and liturgies, and indicates simply that the text may be *the first written form of a tradition*."[76] In this sense, the root texts of the Kar-gling *gter-ma* are only those that can be traced back to Karma-gling-pa himself, or to one of his immediate disciples, e.g., Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas or Nyi-

[75]See Back 1987, esp. pp. 9, and 19-30; Reynolds 1989, pp. x, xii, and 1; Thurman 1994, p. 227.
[76]Gyatso 1991, p. 101. Emphasis added.

zla-chos-rje. From this perspective, the core texts can be understood as the earliest artifacts of the literary tradition. It would appear likely that such truly archaeological treasures could provide a relatively stable marker by which the cycle's movement could be traced through time and place. However, these primary documents are not so easily determined because of the composite and cumulative nature of the collection as a whole. Furthermore, given the unusual character of the *gter-ma's* origin and mode of transfer—i.e., the direct transmission of texts believed to have been prepared in the eighth century but only later "discovered" and distributed from the late fourteenth century—the question of authorship becomes problematic. In other words, the manner in which the original texts were first set down in writing poses a dilemma not easily resolved. The nature of author, text codification, and historical authenticity, therefore, become crucial issues in understanding the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol's* formation and subsequent transmission in Tibet. The task of sifting out primary documents is not made easier even when the most famous and widely distributed set of texts drawn from this large treasury are considered; namely, the elusive *Bar-do thos-grol*. The question of whether an authoritative collection known by that title can actually be identified—not to mention which of the many texts said to belong to the discoveries of Karma-gling-pa are to be included in this enigmatic corpus—has yet to be satisfactorily resolved, and may not be until more diverse arrangements of the *Thos-grol* come to light and are made available in print.[77]

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[77]Of the eight existing facsimile editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, four are reproduced from prints from the same blocks carved in 1943 and preserved at Spa-gro-rdzong in Bhutan (B1, B1a, B4, and DH). These four editions, together with the Bum-thang (B2) and Gar-zhwa (T3) redactions, all represent the arrangement of a single tradition; namely, that received through the controversial *gter-ston* Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. The Sgang-tog (S1) and Kalsang Lhundrup (KS) editions represent the late syncretic Zhe-chen/Smin-gling tradition which was passed through Dil-mgo Mkhyen-rtse Rin-po-che (1910-1991). As we shall see in Chapter 5, it was Nyi-ma-grags-pa's arrangement that came to serve as a classical basis for the standard edition of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and hence for most of the western language translations.

So, in the final analysis it becomes evident that accurate determination of the earliest documents of the Kar-gling literary tradition is extremely difficult, to say the least. For those works that do not carry reference to identifiable authors, we cannot generally rely on what the texts claim for themselves—a great number of the anonymous works are marked at their conclusion by the generic and unremarkable label *karma-gling-pa'i gter-ma'o*, "a treasure of Karma-gling-pa". Furthermore, we certainly cannot base our calculations on the presence or absence of specific conceptual premises, since it has been demonstrated that this literature is largely derivative of a complex network of preexisting ideas already well-formulated and prevalent by the fourteenth century. A meticulous and thorough text critical investigation of all relevant works would perhaps be the only viable method for possibly exposing the various layers of history. However, in the absence of witnesses dating back before the seventeenth century, this method could not possibly uncover an "original" layer, but could only provide us with information relative to the earliest of available documents. This does not mean that such data would be insignificant, for we could learn much about the provenance of the existing texts, but just that from text analysis alone we cannot know anything definite about the actual content of the oldest books. The original manuscripts of Karma-gling-pa and of his immediate disciples—the very first documents of the tradition—are essentially lost to us forever.

The label "core text" might then be used more profitably to refer to something different. In this alternative sense, the descriptive category of "core text" covers those principal texts which have been historically treated as the most important works of the literary tradition. These are the central texts of the cycle, the ones invariably referred to in the commentaries and subsidiary rituals. We could speculate that these historically significant core texts are also historically prior to most of the auxiliary literature, and in this way we could combine the two meanings of "core" outlined above. If we do this,

though, we have to keep in mind that the central texts will not necessarily be the earliest texts, or even the significantly older ones. In fact, the most important texts of a given collection are often younger than the other works contained therein, as for example in the case of texts recently authored by prominent leaders of a particular teaching lineage that come to serve as preeminent works in an older collection affiliated with that specific lineal tradition. The seventeenth-century Kar-gling texts of Rāgasya Karma-chags-med (associated with the Gnas-mdo and Dpal-yul lineages) or those of the nineteenth-century 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul (the Gnas-mdo and Ris-med lineages) are examples that immediately come to mind.[78] Admitting that the central and authoritative texts of a cycle may not in every case reflect "ancient writing", but are nonetheless almost always the primary works, we should now consider what texs might constitute the core structure of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.

In speaking of the central texts of the *Zhi-khro* cycle itself, I would like to return to the sevenfold typology of contents introduced above. Assuming that the fundamental teachings of this *gter-ma* are to be found within all or some of these classifications, and based upon internal evidence drawn from the opening and closing sections of the texts themselves, and on comparative data derived from analysis of the titles referenced by the other works, as well as the frequency each text appears in the various arrangements of the cycle, I would argue that the core structure of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* consists of five texts, or rather a five-fold *network* of texts. They are as follows:

1. *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol* [2d, expiation and confession]
    1.a. *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol*
    1.b. *Zhi-khro'i klong-bshags brjod-pa rang-grol*

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[78]For example, we should mention Karma-chags-med's *Tshe-'das gnas-'dren bsdus-pa* (in PY, fols. 553-583; S3, no. 8; T5, no. 34) and 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul's popular *Nyams-chags sdig-sgrib thams-cad bshags-pa'i rgyal-po na-rag dong-sprug(s)* (in CH, fols. 423-450; NE, no. 9; ZH, fols. 333-355).

2. *Zhi-khro'i las-byang tshor-ba rang-grol* [2a, sādhana]

3. *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* [2a, sādhana]

4. *Btags-grol phung-po rang-grol* [4, wearing-liberation]

5. *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* [3, hearing-liberation]

5.a. *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs*

— *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa* [79]

5.b. *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*

5.c. *Sangs rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*

5.d. *Bar-do drug-gi rtsa-tshig*

5.e. *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*

5.f. *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyob-ma*

Several of these titles are associated with a rather extensive collection of supplementary literature, some of which is shared by more than one text. The *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol*, for example, is complemented by as many as twelve associated works,[80] and editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol* frequently contain not only the *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol*, but also the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*. For this reason, it is necessary to view the five works in relation to one another as a constellation of liturgical texts that derives, in part, from a few basic ritual components; namely, rites of expiation and purification (text 1), generation stage sādhana-s (texts 2 and 3), and

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[79]This text is frequently appended to the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*, sometimes without a break in the text and sometimes as a separate book. In any case, it is found in one form or another in all editions that contain the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*. See B1, fols. 36-56, B1a, fols. 81-121, B2, fols. 62b.5-74a.4, B4, no. 3, DH, fols. 131-171, KS, pp. 43.7-69, S1, no. 3, T3, no. 2, T7, vol. 3, fols. 87.4-113.3.

[80]Consider, for example, Rgya-ra-ba's *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol-gyi sngon-'gro lhan-thabs* and *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol-gyi thugs-dam bskang-ba'i rim-pa* (previously cited); the *Skong-bshags nyams-chag rang-grol-gyi dbang-bskur gnas-spar 'gro-drug rang-grol* (T7, vol. 1, fols. 127-160); or, the *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol-gyi cha-lag tshe-'das gnas-'dren 'gro-drug rang-grol* (CH, fols. 527-536; GK, fols. 733-837; NE; T5; T7, vol. 2, fols. 1-52; T8, vol. 2, fols. 69-169; ZH, fols. 401-459).

wearing- and hearing-liberation teachings (text 4 and 5). The main characteristics of each of these subjects have been discussed above. We are now in a position to determine which text from among these core works is actually the most fundamental to the Kar-gling tradition as a whole. Here we want to find the core of the core, as it were, and from there to make a few tentative historical claims about the status of this root text in relation to a so-called "Tibetan Book of the Dead" (*bod-kyi gshin-yig*).

We should begin by refining our definition of "core" in the present context to mean, in the most practical terms, the main text recited in the ritual. Since the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* is generally identified first and foremost as a funeral *gter-ma*, it stands to reason that the core text of the collection would be the principal liturgical text recited during the accompanying funerary rites. According to Khenpo Namdrol of Dpal-yul monastery, the ritual essence of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* can be condensed into the first three core texts listed above—the *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol*, the *Zhi-khro'i las-byang tshor-ba rang-grol*, and the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*.[81] I would like to argue, furthermore, that the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* is the most central of this triad.[82]

The *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* is a basic Mahāyoga sādhana employing a mandala of forty-two peaceful and fifty-eight wrathful deities—the divine entourage of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. The body of the text (arranged in the order below) is constructed around the verses of two of three primary bardo prayers mentioned in the list

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[81]Interview, August 24, 1997.

[82]The practical importance of this text had already been recognized by Evans-Wentz, but obviously he had not considered it deserving of further study since presumably it was only a digest of the more detailed *Bar-do thos-grol*. See Evans-Wentz 1960, p. 193n.1: "*Chös-spyod-bag-chags-rang-grol* (pron. *Chö-chod-bag-chah-rang-dol*), the title of a metrical version, in brief form, of the *Bardo Thödol*, which, being easy to memorize and thereafter recite as a matter of habit, is referred to as liberating because of such acquired habit or propensity on the part of the deceased, it being supposed that the deceased knows the ritual by heart and that its reading will remind him of it and thereby bring about his liberation."

above, the *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam* and the *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyob-ma*.

1. Ten branch practices for gathering the accumulations (*yan-lag bcu tshog-bsags*)
    - 1.a. taking refuge (*skyabs-su 'gro-ba*)
    - 1.b. inviting the deities (*spyan-'dren-pa*)
    - 1.c. requesting the deities to remain (*bzhugs-su gsol-ba*)
    - 1.d. prostration (*phyag-'tshal-ba*)
    - 1.e. offering (*mchod-pa 'bul-ba*)
    - 1.f. confession of sins (*sdig-pa bshags-pa*)
    - 1.g. rejoicing in others' virtue (*rjes-su-yi rang bya-ba*)
    - 1.h. requesting the deities to turn the wheel of doctrine (*chos-kyi 'khor-lo bskor-ba*)
    - 1.i. requesting the deities not to pass into nirvana (*mya-ngan mi-'da' bzhugs-su gsol-ba*)
    - 1.j. dedication of merit of the unsurpassed great vehicle (*bla-med theg-pa chen-por bsngo-ba*)
2. Forty-two peaceful deities (*zhi-ba'i-lha zhe-gnyis*)
    - 2.a. thirty-six peaceful buddhas (*sangs-rgyas zhi-ba sum-cu so-drug*)
    - 2.b. six sages (*thub-pa drug*)
3. Ten awareness-holders (*rig-'dzin chen-po bcu*)
4. Fifty-eight wrathful herukas (*he-ru-ka khro-bo lnga-bcu nga-brgyad*)
    - 4.a. ten blood-drinking deities (*khrag-'thung bcu*)
    - 4.b. eight wrathful gauri-s (*ke'u-ri brgyad-kyi khro-mo*)
    - 4.c. eight piśāci-s (*phra-men brgyad*)

4.d. four female animal-headed goddesses (*gdong-ma bzhi*)

4.e. twenty-eight yogini-s (*rnal-'byor-ma nyi-shu rtsa-brgyad*)

5. The bardo prayer which protects from fear (*bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyob-ma*)

6. Conclusion/colophon

Nowadays, according to the liturgical traditions followed at the Dpal-yul monastery in Bylakuppe, South India and the Rdzogs-chen monastery in Tokyo, the *Bag-chags rang-grol* is the principal text recited in the Kar-gling ritual as a means of conveying practical instruction to the deceased wandering in the bardo.[83] In contrast, the two works that are almost always accepted without question to be synonymous with the *Bar-do thos-grol* itself, and hence the popular *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, i.e., the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* and the *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, were identified by Khenpo Namdrol of Dpal-yul as special meditation texts (*ngo-sprod*) to be utilized by advanced Rdzogs-chen practitioners, rather than ritual manuals to be recited in the *Zhi-khro* liturgy. Khenpo Namdrol's claim is borne out in the classification schemes from the various *gsan-yig* which we made reference to in our previous discussion. Recall that in those sources these two bardo texts were categorized as *ngo-sprod*, and not as *sgrub-dbang* (with the exception of the fifth Dalai Lama), *thos-grol*, etc. This is important because the prevailing, and evidently mistaken, opinion in both academic and popular circles is that the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* are the main "ritual" texts used in Tibetan funeral liturgy. The primary reason that this unquestioned opinion has become so widespread is clearly the result of the pride-of-place given to these texts in the English

[83] Khenpo Namdrol informed me that the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* is the main text of the Kar-gling liturgy and represents the actual "book of the dead" (*gshin-yig*) employed during the elaborate *zhi-khro* funeral rites (personal communication on August 15, 1997). This view was also confirmed by Ven. Nyichang Rinpoche (Tuptan Chodak Gyatso), head lama of the Rdzogs-chen monastery in Tokyo. According to him, in the Rdzogs-chen tradition the text is recited every day for the first seven days of the funeral service (personal communication on July 29, 1998).

language editions going back to 1927. From these popular books a distorted perception of the importance of these two texts has come to dominate and, in so many ways, restrict our understanding of the Tibetan materials. We will return to this crucial topic further down.

The most compelling evidence lies in the texts themselves. In the colophons of its many printed versions, the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* is uniquely and uniformly identified as (1) an extremely lucid religious practice for gathering the peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-khro 'dus-pa'i chos-spyod rab-gsal*); (2) the practical application (*nyams-len*) of the *Bar-do thos-grol*; (3) the essential heart (*snying-po*) of the *Zhi-khro'i las-byang tshor-ba rang-grol*; (4) the facilitating practice (*cha-rkyen*) of the *Rig-pa rang-grol bar-do gsang-dbang* [*Self-Liberated Awareness: The Secret Bardo Initiation*];[84] and, (5) the main body (*dngos-gzhi*) of the *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol*. Given these distinguished qualities, and considering that the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* is included in no less than twenty of the twenty-one extant editions of the Kar-gling text cycle, and has even been published by itself in a separate volume[85]—an unprecedented occurrence, for no other text, barring the *Zhi-khro'i klong-bshags brjod-pa rang-grol* (included in eighteen editions), has been incorporated into so many different

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[84]This title is not found among the texts of the various Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* collections consulted thus far. Perhaps it is linked to the *mthong-ba rang-grol* series that appears to be affiliated with the *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol*. See, for example, *Dkyil-'khor rnam-dag mthong-ba rang-grol* (ref. DJ, fol. 176.4), Nyi-zla-'od-zer's *Chos-nyid bar-do'i khrid-yig mthong-ba rang-grol* (T7, vol. 2, fols. 401-417), the five works attributed to Rgya-ra-ba—(i) *Ngo-sprod mthong-ba rang-grol-gyi mar-me ngo-sprod-kyi lhan-thabs* (T7, vol. 3, fols. 37-40), (ii) *Ngo-sprod mthong-ba rang-grol-gyi gzhi'i 'od-gsal ngo-sprod-kyis lhan-thabs* (T7, vol. 3, fols. 29-36), (iii) *Chos-nyid bar-do thod-rgal-gyi ngo-sprod mthong-bas rang-grol* (ref. DL, vol. 4, fol. 89.6, TLSY, fol. 390.2-3, and ZD, fol. 511.2), (iv) *Bar-do'i thos-grol-gyi ngo-sprod mthong-ba rang-grol-gyi lag-len-gyi zin-bris* (ref. DJ, fols. 179.6-180.1), (v) *Shel-rdo ngo-sprod mthong-ba rang-grol* (ref. DL, vol. 4, fol. 89.6 and contained in T7, vol. 3, fols. 21-28)—and Karma-chags-med's *Chos-nyid bar-do'i khrid-yig mthong-ba rang-grol-gyi ngo-sprod car-phog khyer-ba deb-zhig* (B3, fols. 147-187).

[85]See edition T2. The *Bag-chags rang-grol* also appears as a separate work, together with the *Thos-grol* itself, in Zhwa-lu ri-sbug sprul-sku Blo-gsal bstan-skyong's (b.1804) publication list (*par-tho*) for the famous Phun-tshogs-gling printing house in Gtsang. The library collection dates from around the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century. See Chandra 1981, vol. 1, p. 31, nos. 632-633. I am grateful to E. Gene Smith for this reference (e-mail correspondence of July 12, 1998). Curiously, the only version of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* in which the *Bag-chags rang-grol* is not included is that collected in the *Rin-chen gter-mdzod* (B3). In its place is found another principal sādhana known as the *Las-byang chung-ba tshor-ba rang-grol snying-po*, one of three such texts comprising the *Zhi-khro'i las-byang tshor-ba rang-grol gsum*. See B3, fols. 3-23.

printed versions—it is certain that the *Bag-chags rang-grol* is the core text—in the sense I have defined above—of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and lies also at the very heart of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*.

3. THE "BOOK OF THE DEAD"

Like the larger cycle from which it is drawn, what we know to be the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* is actually a composite of smaller texts from different historical periods. The first investigator to deal in any detail with the textual history of this literature was Dieter Michael Back. In his two pioneering studies *Eine buddhistische Jenseitsreise* (1979) and *Rig pa ṅo sprod gcer mthoṅ raṅ grol* (1987) he brought to light important source material for the critical study of the so-called *Tibetan Book of the Dead* and helped to clarify many of the historical complexities that still continue to elude its western commentators. Back's contribution stands as an ambitious and relatively successful attempt to construct from the available evidence an account of the possible development of this popular body of literature. The expressed purpose of his research was (1) to locate the *Bar-do thos-grol* within the context of the history of Indian and Buddhist thought, (2) to question the inventiveness of the Tibetan text, and in the end (3) to determine the "basic structure" (Grundstruktur) of the collection itself.[86] It was his specific investigations in connection with this final goal that made his work indispensible for any future research on the subject. For this reason we must critically assess his main arguments before offering our own conclusions.

In *Eine buddhistische Jenseitsreise*, Back concluded based on analysis of the multistratified texts that constitute the *Bar-do thos-grol* that the "core" (Kernstück) of that collection consists of two primary documents: the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and the

[86]See Back 1979, p. 73 and 1987, pp. 5-18.

Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod.[87] The latter, he noted, displays a similar narrative structure to that found in certain ancient Indian texts, such as the *Mārkaṇḍeya* and *Garuḍa-Purāṇa-s*. Also, the Indo-Buddhist *antarābhava* theory which the text expounds is essentially identical to the earlier Abhidharma conception. From an indigenous Tibetan perspective, moreover, "the SB [*Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*] reflects more or less the old shamanist journey after death".[88] In comparison, the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* is purely the product of the Buddhist Vijñānavāda, also called Yogācāra, emphasizing the preeminence of mind (*vijñāna*) and the practice of meditation (*yoga*)—and in this light, according to Back, the *Bar-do thos-grol* is shown actually to be more a "book for the living" (Buch für Lebende) than for the dead.[89]

Upon closer inspection, Back demonstrated that these two central works are incongruous with one another. The *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* chronicles the deceased's journey from the moment of death, when the potential for final liberation is at its zenith, to rebirth in a Buddha's pure land. The *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, on the other hand, begins once more with the moment of death and then recounts the deceased's travels through Yama's court to a new rebirth in samsara. From this observation—already noted previously by Giuseppe Tucci in his own 1949 translation, *Il libro tibetano dei morti*—it was evident that the two texts, though closely connected, actually pursue different goals. Both the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* were products of divergent influences separated by an unspecified historical distance and arranged together to form a seemingly coherent unit.[90] In the final analysis, however, the *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* was believed by Back to represent the older of the two *Bar-do thos-grol* texts

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[87]Back 1979, p. 14. For Back, the relationship between the *Chos-nyid bar-do* (CB) and *Srid-pa bar-do* (SB)-texts and the *Bar-do thos-grol* (BTG) was so close that for all intents and purposes they *were* the *Bar-do thos-grol*. All other texts were hence merely supplements to these two basic works.
[88]Back 1979, p. 240; cf. pp. 187-195.
[89]Back 1979, p. 74.
[90]Back 1979, pp. 19-56.

for two reasons: (1) the text's narrative framework resembles the structure of Indian works which are considerably older, and (2) it pursues a forward goal, as opposed to the *Chos-nyid bar-do*-text which turns back in on itself following the solipsistic theory of the Vijñānavāda. The forward momentum exhibited in the *Srid-pa bar-do*-text corresponds to the ancient direction the dead are thought to travel on their "Buddhist journey to the otherworld" (buddhistische Jenseitsreise), which is likened to the "the shamanistic journey after death" (Die schamanistische Jenseitsreise).[91]

For his second study, which was initiated partially in response to criticism of his theory of a Vijñānavāda influence on the *Bar-do thos-grol*,[92] Back turned his critical eye toward the intriguing philosophical treatise *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol*. It was this Kar-gling text which he thought best illuminated the relationship between the *Bar-do thos-grol* and the Vijñānavāda described in his previous work. In this study, Back's primary goal was to establish a reliable critical edition and new translation of the Tibetan text derived from all available blockprint and manuscript recensions. Although his philological and philosophical augmentations are interesting in their own right, the significance of this study is best understood in light of his introductory comments which precede the actual subject of the book.

In that discussion, Back introduced his conclusions concerning a possible core structure of the *Bar-do thos-grol* collection. His insights were drawn from a thorough investigation of the contents of all editions available to him. As his copy-text or base-text upon which all other variant texts would be compared, he selected a manuscript preserved

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[91] Back 1979, pp. 187-201.

[92] See Back 1987, p. vii: "In seiner Besprechung meiner 'Buddhistischen Jenseitsreise' hat Herr M. Taube zurecht bemerkt, dass der Einfluss des Vijñānavāda auf den Bar do thos grol weiterer Untersuchungen bedürfe und darüber noch nicht das letzte Wort gesprochen sei."

in the Lhasa Collection of the India Office Library (Lhasa K25).[93] Based on comparison of this manuscript and the Kazi Dawa Samdup/Evans-Wentz translation, Back asserted that the earliest and most basic structure of the *Bar-do thos-grol* must have consisted of seven or eight individual texts:[94]

1. *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs*
2. *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa*
3. *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*
4. *Sangs rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*
5. *Bar-do rtsa-tshig*
6. *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*
7. *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma*

*8. *Btags-grol phung-po rang-grol*

Back then argued that this arrangement of texts can be documented early as a unified collection and that this can be determined from examining the texts themselves, for the texts in question make internal references to each other, as well as to other titles not included in the list above.[95] Noting, however, that the majority of the extant editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol* included more texts than this group of eight, Back introduced his "principle of expansion" (Prinzip der Erweiterung) in which he surmised that the original *Bar-do thos-grol* collection was extended to include a total of seventeen texts—as seen documented, for example, in the blockprint collection purchased in 1919 by Major W. L.

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[93]Back 1987, p. 6n.18. This corresponds to BL 684; OR Tib I 228, see Chapter 5 and Appendix 3. I am grateful to Burkhard Quessel for kindly providing me several digital images of pages from this interesting manuscript.
[94]Back 1987, pp. 6-7 and 9.
[95]Back 1987, p. 7.

Campbell.[96] The proof for this expansion theory lay in the seemingly peculiar placement of certain colophons.

As Back correctly noted, the "signature" (Unterschrift) or final colophon is usually attached to the end of a complete volume. In the case of many of the *Bar-do thos-grol* collections, however, such "signatures" appear in the middle of the volume. Accordingly, this fact showed that the basic collection had been expanded to include other works.[97] The colophons in the middle of the *Bar-do thos-grol* collections indicated that there was at one time a smaller, more unified collection with the traditional colophon placed originally at the conclusion of the final text. Alternatively, Back suggested that the middle colophons might instead point to the possibility that the collection—here taken as a "final redaction" (Endredaktion)—had been assembled using texts from different sources, and so the colophons would appear in the middle.[98]

The two possibilities for interpretation of the middle colophons justified Back's formulation of yet another hypothesis. The expanded *Bar-do thos-grol* collections can be viewed from two perspectives, each reflecting a different type of textual tradition. The first is performative in the sense that the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* collection were arranged to be recited during the rites for the dead. This is the "ritual edition" (Ritualanweisung) intended to carry a sort of "living utility" (lebhaften Gebrauch).[99] Back viewed this type of collection as comprised of an original body of texts to which other texts had been subsequently appended, e.g., the Lhasa manuscript (BL 684). The original integrity of such a volume might be broken up by the insertion of prayers and so forth required in the ritual performance. This appended material would explain why we find

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[96]Back 1987, p. 11; cf. also Evans-Wentz 1927, p. 71n.1.
[97]Back 1987, p. 11.
[98]Back 1987, p. 13.
[99]Back 1987, p. 9.

colophons in the middle of the collection.[100] The second type is the so-called "library edition" (Bibliothekarischen)—the *Bar-do thos-grol* arranged as a "book" proper, i.e., the collection that best approximates the *Bar-do thos-grol* as we know it in translation. With the library edition, Back explained that the *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do* texts with appendices had been already integrated such that all component texts were seamlessly connected in one book. In this case, generally the title of a new text would follow the colophon of the previous text on the same engraving block.[101] Presumably, this sort of collection was utilized solely as a book for study and/or memorization. In the end, Back concluded that the "ritual edition" reflected the earliest structure of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and that ultimately the *Srid-pa bar-do* text was the oldest *Bar-do thos-grol* work. Nevertheless, all editions whether they be intended as liturgical or library collections remained open and subject to further emendation and expansion.[102]

Although Back's studies on the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* are fundamental, his work is not without serious flaws. First and foremost, Back had obviously failed to grasp the full context of the literature in question. His insistence on the Vijñānavāda as the primary conceptual basis of the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* is peculiar, to say the least, considering the text's blatant Rdzogs-chen orientation.[103] This eccentric and clearly

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[100]Back 1987, p. 12.

[101]Back 1987, p. 12: "Diese Art ist am deutlichsten in der Sammlung B dokumentiert, wo die Texte CB, SB und Gebetsanhänge nahtlos ineinander übergehen, d.h. nach dem Kolophon erfolgt auf derselben Druckplatte der Titel des neuen Textes."

[102]Back 1987, p. 13.

[103]In fact, the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* is the very embodiment of the refined perspective of Rdzogs-chen, and especially the teachings of the Snying-thig described in Chapter 1, and is derived from key sources of that tradition. Of these sources, there are several works included in the controversial "canon" of the Rnying-ma-pas, the *Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum* that appear to have exerted a profound influence on the teachings of the *Bar-do thos-grol* as a whole, e.g., the eleventh century *Nyi-ma dang zla-ba kha-sbyor-ba chen-po gsang-ba'i rgyud* (in NGB Mtshams-brag, vol. 12, no. 9; NGB Gting-skyes, vol. 9, no. 146), and the apparently earlier *Rin-po-che srid-pa bar-do rang-snang-ba'i rgyud* (in NGB Mtshams-brag, vol. 4, no. 26; NGB Gting-skyes, vol. 4, no. 66; and also in VGB, vol. 3, no. 19.). On this point, the recent Brag-dkar-rta-so lama Dkar-brgyud Bstan-'dzin-nor-bu (1859-1959) states in his polemical work *Thos-grol dgag-pa gnyis-pa'i len tsangs-pa'i drang-thig*: "The explanation of the six bardos, the basis of the so-called *Thos-grol* is not without its source, for its own basic context is derived from [two] tantras from the first translation period, the *Nyi-zla kha-sbyor* and the *Bar-do gsang-ba'i rgyud*." See THGL, fols. 343.6-344.1: *thos grol* [344] *bya ba'i gzhi bar do drug bshad khungs med*

inadequate interpretation makes it seem as if Back had no understanding of the doctrinal history of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition from which the *Bar-do thos-grol* emerged, nor curiously enough even a basic background knowledge of tantra and its central role in Tibetan religious thought. Furthermore, despite appearances to the contrary, he had not explored even superficially the historical and cultural circumstances of the *Bar-do thos-grol*'s composition and transmission in Tibet. In his analyses of the extant textual editions he had not taken into account crucial factors such as local variation, lineal affiliation, or date and location of printing. These failings severely weaken his position from the outset.

Back makes several uncontested assumptions throughout his study, particularly in his *Rig pa ṅo sprod gcer mthoṅ raṅ grol*. First, he accepts without offering any historical justification that the Lhasa manuscript of the India Office Library is the earliest witness of the *Bar-do thos-grol* collection, when in fact it probably dates no earlier than the mid-nineteenth century.[104] Back also accepts that the texts chosen for translation by Kazi Dawa Samdup and Evans-Wentz are actually representative of that oldest collection. It would appear that Back had presumed priority of the English language version before he even sought to discover the origins of the Tibetan texts. Similarly, in this regard, he accepts without question the arbitrary format of the Evans-Wentz publication, in which the bardo prayers appear separately as appendices to the body of the text proper. This is in no way evident in the Tibetan editions consulted by either himself or Evans-Wentz. In

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pa ma lags te / rang khung gi gzhi snga 'gyur rgyud nyi zla kha sbyor dang bar do gsang ba'i rgyud. The *Bar-do gsang-ba'i rgyud* is found in NGB Mtshams-brag, vol. 4, no. 15; VGB, vol. 4, no. 2(c). Mention should also be made of the intriguing *Man-ngag snying-gi dgongs-pa rgyal-ba'i bka' zhes-bya-ba'i rgyud* (in NGB Mtshams-brag, vol. 13, no. 24; NGB Gting-skyes, vol. 5, no. 84). This text is the recent subject of an engaging article by Henk Blezer forthcoming in *New Horizons in Asian Studies*. The *Gsang-ba'i snying-po* (Skt., *Guhyagarbha*), the principle tantra of the Mahāyoga system, is acknowledged as the primary source for the mandalas of the one hundred peaceful and wrathful deities—a crucial distinguishing mark of both the Rnying-ma-pa and Bon-po bardo conceptions.

[104]Internal evidence found in the closing sections of a few of its texts indicates a likely connection to the tradition of the great Ris-med *gter-ston* Mchog-gyur Bde-chen-gling-pa (1829-1870).

those editions no indication can be found which specifies what text should be prioritized over another, or what text should be identified as an "appendix".

As for the constitution of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, Back assumes that the *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do* texts are the quintessence of the collection itself and represent its ritual core, but no ethnographic or "living" evidence in support of this position is ever presented. He axiomatically assumes based solely on what the two texts say about themselves that the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* were not only important but also read and fully implemented in actual practice—"if it said so in a text it must have been so in reality".[105] To be fair, Back should be commended for his acknowledgement of the priority of a ritual function for many of the *Bar-do thos-grol* texts (which, ironically, does not apply to the *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do* texts), but from this he draws artificial distinctions between types of textual editions. In a culture where the book served a variety of idealized purposes the least of which was reading, in our sense of the term, it is difficult to imagine just how Back's so-called "library edition" of the *Bar-do thos-grol* would have been used in Tibet.[106] Granted, there are notable differences between the editions Back chooses to identify as "Bibliothekarischen" and those less structurally polished, but most of these features can be explained by the specific circumstances in which the collections were compiled. For example, the authoritative and relatively recent three-volume edition reproduced from a manuscript collection in the library of Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (1904-1987)—identified as "library edition" G in Back's study—was prepared with the intention of preserving the most complete and representative corpus of the cycle as defined by the chief lama of the transmission. In this case, the chief lama was Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che, who at that time

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[105]These are the words of Gregory Schopen expressed in the context of a critique of traditional text-based academic studies on the history of Indian Buddhism. See Schopen 1997, p. 4.
[106]Here, we should recall the remark by Per Kvaerne that "outside of the ritual context the [*Bar-do thos-grol*] has no function at all in Tibetan religion." See Brauen and Kvaerne 1978c, p. 10.

was the supreme head of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition.[107] For this edition, and others like it,[108] as many relevant print copies as could be obtained were recast and embellished with whatever appropriate set of related teachings could also be located. These texts were edited, arranged, and published not so much as editions to be consulted for private study but more so in order to preserve and disseminate the tradition's textual lineage for the sole purpose of practice and liturgy. Indeed, in this light all arrangements of the *Bar-do thos-grol* can be seen as "editions for use"—with perhaps the slight exception of those published for the commercial market to meet the demands of a public infatuated with the *Tibetan Book of the Dead.* If Back had only investigated a little more thoroughly the story behind the editions which he consulted, he might have recognized that his distinctions were based more or less on contrived and ill-founded premises.

Finally, in regard to the history of the core structure of the *Bar-do thos-grol*—and this applies to the arguments presented primarily in *Eine buddhistische Jenseitsreise*—we may recall that Back takes the *Srid-pa bar-do* text as the earliest work of the *Bar-do thos-grol* based on the observation that its narrative structure resembles earlier Indian texts, and that its *antarābhava* theory is essentially identical to the earlier Indo-Buddhist Abhidharma notion. The reasoning here appears to be based on an implicit and curious presupposition that textual documents containing reference to older ideas, or exhibiting the structure of older works, are themselves necessarily of similar antiquity. Clearly, such a conjecture if willfully applied would lead to the formulation of some peculiar historical and chronological statements.

Back's meticulous structural analysis of the *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do* texts in his 1979 study only served to highlight a rather obvious disjunction between two

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[107]Dudjom 1991, p. xxv.
[108]See, particularly, editions B3, GK, PY, T7, and T8.

independent texts. His conclusions offer very little by way of clarifying the specific context and process by which these single works came to be arranged in the order we know today. It seems reasonable to expect that any argument for the relative antiquity of the structure of these texts, and of the texts themselves, must begin first with some consideration of the historical circumstances involved in their redaction. Back's tendency to view the history of the *Bar-do thos-grol* from a somewhat flattened philological perspective hampers, for example, his interpretation—so crucial to his main argument—of the colophons found in the middle of the collections. A true "signature" colophon (i.e., statement of title, location, author and/or scribe, publication details, etc.) found in the middle of a collection indicates simply that it is not the original collection to which the colophon refers. In other words—and I think Back seems to have understood this as an alternative possibility—that collection, the so-called "final redaction" (Endredaktion), was put together with texts from different collections. And although it may be true in some cases that these other collections might be earlier than the one in question, it is not possible to comment on just how early they might be from evidence drawn only from the available redaction. Our "Endredaktion" might just as well have been compiled from manuscript or blockprint collections prepared only a few years earlier. This we can determine only by knowing when all of the individual collections had been produced. Indeed, this is the position in which we find ourselves today with regard to the extant *Bar-do thos-grol* collections. As we stressed before, every edition we now possess has come down to us in the form of manuscripts, xylographic prints, and facsimile reproductions from blocks prepared only in the last two centuries. This means necessarily that a thorough text critical investigation of all relevant works can only provide us with information relative to the earliest of available documents, but no definite knowledge about the actual content of the oldest books of the tradition itself.

So then how do we decide on the core structure of the *Bar-do thos-grol*? Again, a problem with relying on Back's "colophon argument" can be stated more clearly using an example. If from the appearance of "signature" colophons in the middle of a collection we were able to sift out not one but two basic textual units, as indeed we can, how would we determine which set is the earliest? Also, what would be included in our two sets? Using analytical methods similar to those employed by Back, and based on a close examination of the textual sequence and uniform arrangement of the existing editions of the Kar-gling cycle, we can distinguish two separate but related units of text, which in almost every case are presented in the following order:

SET A	SET B
(1) *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*	(1) *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*
— colophon	— colophon
(2) *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*	
— colophon	
(3) *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*	(2) *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*
(4) *Bar-do rtsa-tshig*	(3) *Bar-do rtsa-tshig*
(5) *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*	(4) *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*
(6) *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma*	(5) *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma*
— colophon	— colophon

Accepting that the "signature" colophon usually demarcates an independent textual unit, we can see that these two sets are actually composed of several of such units. In set A we find three distinct items—the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*, *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*,

and bardo prayers—while in set B there are only the prayers and the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*. Therefore, according to Back's "middle colophon" theory we appear to have four separate texts or textual groups which at one time had been single literary units. Accordingly, at some point these four texts must have been gathered together to form two basic unified collections, which in the existing recensions are found consistently as two separate core groups. Over time the additional texts of the collections were either woven into this framework or appended as separate items.

The first group, set A, is found only in a minority of extant Kar-gling editions identified explicitly by the title *Bar-do thos-grol*. More precisely, these editions are tied to the sixteenth and seventeenth-century traditions followed at the monastery of Lho-brag Lha-lung and subsequently standardized by the *gter-ston* Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa.[109] The second group, set B, is found invariably in all other collections usually labelled *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. We should rephrase our question. If indeed the colophons in the middle of sets A and B reveal the preexistence of four independent texts or groups of text, then how might we determine which text is the earliest?

First, we should note that the possibility of set B is not even acknowledged by Back in either of his studies—it seems he did not have access to the full spectrum of available recensions as we do now. But accepting that both sets can be discerned, how can we approach the question? I think Back is correct to focus on the internal textual references cited in the texts themselves, but in his case he failed to note that such references may actually indicate the historical *priority* of the titles to which the text refers. To put it another way, texts whose titles are referenced by name were most likely extant before the time of the referencing text. If Back had taken this into account he might have noticed that

[109]See, particularly B1, B1a, B4, DH, B2, and T3. Alternative editions representing the closely related Smin-grol-gling tradition are KS, S1, and the exception, T7, vol. 3. See discussion in Chapters 4 and 5.

the four bardo prayers, as well as the important *Bag-chags-rang-grol*, make no explicit references to the titles *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* or *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, although references are made to the prayer titles themselves. In the specific case of the *Bag-chags-rang-grol*, there are internal references also to the *Bar-do thos-grol* in general and to a few other basic texts.[110] We cannot immediately presume here that the title *Bar-do thos-grol* in this work refers to the combined *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do* texts, although we can suppose reference to key instructions on the relevant bardo practices. On the other hand, it should be emphasized that both the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* do specify explicitly by title all five texts included in set B. In light of this it would appear that set B might better represent the older, or at least more basic and certainly prevalent, form of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, which now cannot be assumed unquestionably to consist only of the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*.

As for the status of the individual texts, it seems quite evident that the bardo prayers represent the oldest layer of this literary tradition. We have already argued that the *Bag-chags-rang-grol* is the core ritual text of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, and now with these prayers we might suggest a possible prototype of the *Chos-nyid bar-do* and *Srid-pa bar-do* texts. Thinking in historical terms, it may be that the latter works are not as old as some of the core texts of the larger cycle to which they belong, or even of the fundamental works of the *Bar-do thos-grol* itself, as Back would have us believe. The historical authenticity of the two texts has even been the subject of some doubt within the tradition followed in Bhutan. In the eighteenth-century *gsan-yig* of the first Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul (Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal), we find a small note (*mchan*) inserted after the titles *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa'i bar-do ngo-sprod*. The note reads: "Although

[110] These include the *Zhi-khro'i las-byang tshor-ba rang-grol*, the *Rig-pa rang-grol bar-do gsang-dbang*, and the *Bskang-bshags nyams-chags rang-grol*.

these two texts are referred to as *gter-ma*, some lamas claim that they are [actually] counterfeit."[111] Here, the phrase "counterfeit treasure" (*gter-rdzus*) indicates that some teachers could not accept the two texts as genuine concealed teachings of Padmasambhava. Although there is no way of knowing whether the Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul himself inserted this gloss or whether a scribe copied it into the text under his own volition, the note reveals that someone along the way had indeed suggested that the two bardo texts may have been composed by some later author, perhaps trying to pass them off as authentic *gter-ma* revelation. The author of the gloss could have been referring to Karma-gling-pa or maybe to some later compositor, we may never know. In any event, it is noteworthy that within the tradition itself there is some evidence of controversy surrounding these two particular works.

In light of the evidence introduced above and based on internal textual analysis, I would argue specifically that the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* (including the *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa*) is likely a later composition compiled from earlier Kar-gling materials.[112] The text is structured in the following manner:

1. Preliminary section (*sngon-'gro*)
2. Direct introduction to the clear light in the bardo of dying (*'chi-kha'i bar-do la 'od-gsal ngo-sprod*)
    - 2.a. offering (*gdab-lugs*)
    - 2.b. gathering the offering (*gdab-pa'i dus*)
    - 2.c. offering [the transference] (*gdab-lugs*, *'pho-ba*)

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[111] ZD, fol. 511.5: *'di gnyis gter mar kha 'phangs kyang bla ma 'ga' zhig gter rdzus su bzhed.*

[112] We also find throughout the text explicit reference to a number of titles of familiar Kar-gling texts, suggesting again that the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* was compiled at a relatively later date. The titles mentioned include *'Chi-ltas mtshan-ma rang-grol*, *Btags-grol [phung-po rang-grol]*, *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*, *Bar-do drug-gi rtsa-tshig*, *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*, and *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam.*

2.d. direct introduction (*ngo-sprod*)

2.d.i. the first bardo: the clear light of reality-itself (*bar-do dang-po chos-nyid 'od-gsal*)

2.d.ii. direct introduction to the clear light of naked self-awareness (*rang-rig rjen-pa 'od-gsal du ngo-sprod*)

3. The essential point of the direct introduction (*ngo-sprod-pa'i gnad*)

3.a. Forty-two peaceful deities (*zhi-ba'i lha bzhi-bcu rtsa-gnyis*)

3.a.i. first week (days 1-7) (*bdun-tshigs dang-po*)

[End of *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* proper]

[Begin *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa*]

1. Fifty-eight wrathful deities (*khro-bo'i lha lnga-bcu nga-brgyad*)

1.a. introduction (*gleng-gzhi*)

1.b. second week (days 8-14) (*bdun-tshigs gnyis-pa*)

2. Conclusion/colophon

Like the *Bag-chags rang-grol*, the *Chos-nyid bar-do* text is constructed around a *zhi-khro* sādhana and has embedded within it a basic stock of prayer verses referred to collectively as *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*, employing the very same *zhi-khro* mandala.[113] Below I offer two examples of such verse, the first is taken from the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* and the second from the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs*:

[1]

"Immediately after you [so-and-so] have left your body, having died,

When the visions of the bardo of reality-itself dawn,

When through intense hatred you wander in cyclic existence,

On the luminous path of the mirror[-like] pristine wisdom,

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[113]The text also includes the *Bar-do 'jigs-skyob-ma*.

May blessed Vajrasattva lead you along the way,

May his supreme consort, Locanā, support you from behind.

May they help you cross the frightening and perilous pathways of the bardo,

And carry you to the thoroughly perfect buddha realm."[114]

[2]

"Alas! When through intense hatred you wander in cyclic existence,

On the luminous path of the mirror[-like] pristine wisdom,

May blessed Vajrasattva lead you along the way,

May his supreme consort, Locanā, support you from behind.

May they help you cross the frightening and perilous pathways of the bardo,

And carry you to the thoroughly perfect buddha realm."[115]

It is remarkable that an almost identical *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol* prayer weaved throughout a similar *zhi-khro* sādhana can be found in a Bon-po work attributed to the late twelfth-century *gter-ston* Dam-pa-rang-grol Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan (1149-1206).[116] This work is entitled *Snyan-brgyud thos-grol bar-do 'phrang-sgrol chen-po* [*Oral Tradition of the Liberation upon Hearing: The Great Deliverance from the Perilous Straits of the Intermediate State*]. A single prayer verse will suffice to illustrate the striking similarities between this and the Buddhist texts:

"After I have left my body, having died,

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[114]B1a, fol. 278.1-4: *bdag sogs tshe 'phos lus rjes gyur ma thag : chos nyid bar do'i snang ba 'char dus der : zhe sdang drug pos 'khor ba 'khyams pa'i tshe : me long ye shes gsal ba'i 'od lam la : bcom ldan rdo rje sems dpas lam sna drongs : yum mchog sangs rgyas spyan mas rgyab nas skyor : bar do 'jigs pa'i 'phrang las bsgral du gsol : yang dag rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas sa ru skyol.*

[115]B1a, fol. 41.3: *kyai ma zhe sdang drag pos 'khor bar 'khyams pa'i tshe : me long ye shes gsal ba'i 'od lam la : bcom ldan rdo rje sems dpas lam sna drongs : yum mchog sangs rgyas spyan mas rgyab nas bskyor : bar do'i 'jigs pa'i phrang las bsgral du gsol : yang dag rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas sa ru skyol.*

[116]In the transmission lineage reported in the text's colophon we find the following succession of teachers: Sprul-sku Tshe-dbang rig-'dzin, 'Gro-mgon Dam-pa-rang-grol, Shar-pa-rnal-'byor, Rnal-'byor-tog-gi-rgyal-mtshan, and Bru[-sgom] Rgyal-ba-g.yung-drung (1242-1290).

When the visions of the clear light of reality-itself (*bon-nyid*) dawn,

When I wander in the ocean of suffering,

On the luminous path of the pure sphere and pristine wisdom,

May the eight primordial *gshen* heroes (*sems-dpa'*) lead me along the way,

May their eight primordial awakened consorts support me from behind.

May they help me cross the frightening and perilous pathways of the bardo,

Carry me to the enlightened realm of great bliss,

And place me on the level of indivisible great bliss."[117]

The basic elements of verse shared by all three texts (Buddhist and Bon) can be distilled as follows:

(a) "when wandering in the cycle (of existence)" (*'khor-ba 'khyams-pa'i tshe*)

(b) "on the luminous path" (*gsal-ba'i 'od-lam la*)

(c) "(may X) lead the way" (*lam sna-drongs*)

(d) "(may X) give support from behind" (*rgyab-nas skyor*)

(e) "request (X) for help to cross over the frightening and perilous pathways of the bardo" (*bar-do 'jigs-pa'i 'phrang-las bsgral-du gsol*)

(f) "(request X for help to carry to) the buddha realm" (*sangs-rgyas zhing/sa (bsgral-du gsol/skyol)*

When combined with specific ritual gestures and the names of particular deities and associated attributes this generic set of verse becomes a potent prayer to accompany the deceased's migration. The prayer comes complete with allusions to the terrors of the

[117]BPCT, fol. 367.1-4: *bdag sogs 'di nas tshe 'phos lus brjes dus / bon nyid 'od gsal snang ba 'char dus 'dir / sdug bsngal rgya mtsho 'khor ba 'khyams pa'i tshe / dbyings dang ye shes gsal ba'i 'od lam la / ye gshen sems dpa' brgyad kyi lam sna drongs / ye sangs lcam brgyad yum gyi rgyab nas skyor / bar do 'jigs pa'i 'phrang las bsgral du gsol / bde chen sangs rgyas zhing du bskyal du gsol / bde chen dbyer med sa la bkod du gsol.*

journey after death and entreaties to the buddhas and divine beings to deliver the departed from fear and suffering and to show the path to a higher destiny. In this way, the prayer contributes to the overall aims of the funeral ritual—purification of the sins of the departed, deliverance from the dangerous pathways of the bardo, and rebirth in some auspicious realm.

Returning briefly to the *Snyan-brgyud thos-grol bar-do 'phrang-sgrol chen-po*, we should emphasize that this text is accepted as the Bon-po tradition's own *Bar-do thos-grol.*[118] But despite the obvious parallels, the text shares very little in common with the famous *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*. It does, however, resemble quite closely—in terms of shared passages and overall structure—the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*, the most fundamental text of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*. Like its Buddhist counterpart, the Bon text is also appropriately called *Las-byang bag-chags rang-grol* in one of its major recensions.[119] Questions of a historical link between these two works have yet to be addressed and serve as important topics for future research. For comparison a brief outline of the Bon text is offered below:

1. Introductory section (*gleng-gzhi*)
    - 1.a. taking refuge and generating the enlightened mind (*skyabs-su 'gro-ba dang sems-bskyed*)
    - 1.b. offering the seat (*gdan-'bul*)

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[118] See Karmay 1977; Kvaerne 1974, p. 123. The version of the Bon-po *Thos-grol* mentioned above (1) represents the Bru lineage and is published in BPCT, fols. 321-439. The text is also extant in two other recensions: (2) *Zhi-khro bar-do 'phrang-grol-gyi thos-grol las-byang bag-chags rang-grol* (Zhu lineage), in ZHRL, vol. 2, fols. 249-330, and (3) *Snyan-brgyud bar-do thos-grol gsal-sgron chen-mo* (Bru lineage), in ZKGK, fols. 605-691. It would appear that the three versions are essentially identical, except for minor variations and omissions of certain words and phrases. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Ponlob Trinley Nyima Rinpoche of Sman-ri monastery in Dolanji who very kindly read with me significant portions of text edition #3 and offered invaluable clarifications on many of its obscure passages. I also wish to thank Henk Blezer for referring me to text edition #2. Blezer is currently preparing a detailed comparative study of these Bon texts.

[119] The epithets *chos-spyod* and *las-byang* are for the most part synonymous.

1.c. inviting the deities (*spyan-drangs*)

1.d. confession (*bshags-pa*)

1.e. arrangement of the eight feasts and offerings (*tshogs dang mchod-rdzas rnam-brgyad 'byor-tshad bshams*)

1.f. rejoicing in others' virtue (*rjes-su-yi rang bya-ba*)

1.g. requesting the deities to turn the wheel of the oral teaching (*bka'i 'khor-lo bskor-ba*)

1.h. requesting [the deities to remain] (*gsol-ba gdabs*)

1.i. dedication of merit (*bsngo-ba-bya*)

1.j. Heart-essence, generation stage, and numbered recitation (*snying-po dang bskyed-rim dang 'dzab-bgrang*)

1.j.i heart-essence of the assemby of the peaceful and wrathful deities (*zhi-khro sbrag-ma'i snying-po*)

1.j.ii. heart-essence of all buddhas of the three times (*dus-gsum sangs-rgyas thams-cad-kyi snying-po*)

2. Forty-two peaceful deities (*zhi-lha bzhi-bcu rtsa-gnyis*)

3. Eighty-six wrathful kings (*khro-rgyal brgyad-cu rtsa-drug*)

4. Six tamed *gshen* and the bardo visions of the six realms (*'dul-ba'i gshen-drug, rigs-drug bar-do'i mthong-snang drug*)

4.a. Gsang-ba-ngang-ring (hell realm)

4.b. Mu-chu-ldem-drug (hungry ghost realm)

4.c. Ti-sangs-rang-zhi (animal realm)

4.d. Gra-byin-don-spangs (human realm)

4.e. Lce-rgyal-bar-ti (demi-god realm)

4.f. Ye-shes-gtsug-phud (god realm)

5. Disintegration of the five psychophysical elements (*'byung-ba lnga 'jig*)

6. Generation of the three bodies (*sku-gsum skye*)
7. Transformation into the white-syllable A (*a-dkar-po zhig-tu gyur*)
8. Conclusion/colophon

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In concluding this chapter, I wish to summarize my thoughts on the possible structural history of the famous *Bar-do thos-grol.* I should stress, however, that my comments here are somewhat tentative, and thus my conclusions may have to be modified and perhaps, in part, rejected as more evidence is brought to light. Based on analysis of the prayer verses included in sets A and B and weaved throughout the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*, *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, and *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*, I suspect that all of these texts were derived from a basic stock of prayers. In particular, I believe that the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*—and its Bon-po counterpart, the *Las-byang bag-chags rang-grol*—were created around a single prayer known in the later Kar-gling sources by the title *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam.* In my opinion, the *Bag-chags* sādhana in both its Buddhist and Bon-po form was built from pieces of this earlier prayer. As such the two *Bag-chags rang-grol* texts represent more or less the same independent work within two distinct sectarian contexts, and likely mark the culmination of a gradual process of assimilation and elaboration of a much older set of Tibetan funeral verses. In this light, the relatively inconspicuous *Bag-chag rang-grol* may reveal itself to be the original "Tibetan Book of the Dead".

The Bon-po *Bar-do thos-grol* may have picked up the *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol* prayer from a source in which it was separately transmitted as the sole prayer for the dead, just as the Buddhist *Bar-do thos-grol* may have done. I think it is quite evident that the Buddhist cycle drew on a similar if not identical source and inserted the one prayer into an

evolving rite for the dead and dying, which appears to have been ultimately systematized in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century. The prayer contained in the Buddhist *Bag-chags* sādhana, in turn, eventually became part of the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and subsequent works belonging to the Kar-gling textual tradition.[120] Was this the accomplishment of the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa himself, who tradition depicted as a "discoverer" of some previously hidden texts? The historical record offers only vague and fragmented evidence. Questions remain over the extent to which Karma-gling-pa participated in, altered, or redirected the structure and meanings of the funeral rites inscribed in the works associated with him. What does seem clear, however, is that after him the remarkable and influential series of ritual texts which would be identified collectively as the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*—and here I mean to refer to set A above—took shape in its earlier form at two obscure monasteries in southeastern Tibet, namely Dwags-po Rtse-le and Kong-po Thang-'brog.[121] The tradition was soon transmitted to the monastery of Lho-brag Lha-lung and later to the *gter-ston* Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa, who would come to standardize it in the late seventeenth century.

In the end I want to suggest that around the end of the fourteenth century, Karma-gling-pa and those immediately close to him (including most importantly his father Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas and his son Nyi-zla-chos-rje) had brought together the various liturgical materials on death and dying which had been created and put into circulation during the previous few centuries (all drawn primarily from earlier Rdzogs-chen sources) and had synthesized them into a coherent and practical ritual complex (perhaps as represented in set B above). With various alterations and additions by figures such as the nebulous

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[120]Other later works in which these verses appear include, for example, two texts by Karma-chags-med, the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i khrid-yig mthong-ba rang-grol-gyi ngo-sprod car-phog khyer bde-ba zhig* (in B3, fols. 176.3-178.3) and the *Gnas-'dren 'gro-drug rang-grol khrigs-su bkod-pa* (in e.g., T8, v.1, fols. 448.2-450.3).

[121]There is also an intriguing Zur-mang connection which we shall discuss briefly in Chapter 4.

lamas Mgon-po-rdo-rje[122] and Nyi-zla-'od-zer, this ritual complex was then given an institutional foundation in the late fifteenth century at the hands of Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. Rgya-ra-ba's program subsequently became the basic ritual response to death and dying among the Rnying-ma-pa—and in a few instances among certain followers of the Bka'-brgyud tradition—for long afterward. It is to this topic of origins and the propogation of the textual lineages that I will consider in the remaining chapters.

[122]This obscure lama, about whom we know almost nothing, hailed from Kong-po. From lineage records it appears that he was associated with Karma-gling-pa's *Dbang-bzhi yongs-rdzogs* and *'Og-sgo bde-chen* instructions. As we shall see, he was in fact the one responsible for the spread of the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmissions that would be received through the Rtse-le, Thang-'brog, and Zur-mang lineages.

3.

Origin Myths and the Transformation into Lineage

In this chapter we examine the biographies of Karma-gling-pa and of his principal disciples, including a discussion of the early history of the transmission of the *Zhi-khro* revelations. We will consider the problems encountered in the various narrative accounts of this history with a speculative attempt at resolution, and conclude by arguing that the institutionalization of the liturgy of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was largely the responsibility of a fifteenth-century monk from Kong-po named Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, the fourth lineage-holder of the Kar-gling transmissions and grand-disciple of Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje. It was this obscure monastic leader and holder of the abbatial throne of Sman-mo Bkra-shis-mgon who composed the largest number of commentaries and instruction manuals on the performance of these rituals, as well as the earliest known history of the tradition.

Since the historical evidence is scattered and difficult to interpret, our knowledge of the origins of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and of the main figures involved in its discovery and distribution is fragmented and incomplete. What little we do know is based on a small number of Tibetan sources from different historical periods. The most detailed, and hence most important, accounts of the early period can be found in Rgya-ra-ba's *Brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, in the brief work of his student Chos-rje Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan (b.1446),[1] and in the *Chos-'byung* [*Religious History*] of Guru Bkra-shis (b.1775).[2] A seventeenth-century work mistakenly attributed to Sha-gzugs-pa Nga-dbang-bkra-shis-rnam-rgyal (henceforth referred to anonymously as *Gter-*

[1] See OGTL.
[2] See GKCB, esp. pp. 457-460 and 480-481.

ma'i lo-rgyus) has also proved quite helpful.[3] The additional histories of Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-rgyal (17th century),[4] Kun-bzang-nges-don-klong-yangs (b.1814),[5] 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul (1813-1899),[6] and Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (1904-1987)[7] are generally repetitive but nevertheless useful, and occasionally provide details not found in the principal texts.

The details concerning the prophecies (*lung-bstan*) of Padmasambhava on the future revelation of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* are drawn almost exclusively from an

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[3]See TMLG, fols. 65a.5-66b.8. It has been suggested that the author of this work was Sha-gzugs-pa Ngag-dbang-bkra-shis-rnam-rgyal, disciple of Rdo-rje-brag Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi-dbang-po (1580-1639). The manuscript, therefore, has been dated to around the seventeenth century. Recently, the authorship of the text has been a source of some confusion. So far the official word on the issue has been offered by Dan Martin as an addendum (entry no. 638) to his *Tibetan Histories* (e-mail correspondence of January 19, 1999): "This should be identified with a title found on a photocopy in the possession of E.Gene Smith, *Zab Rgyas Gter-ma'i Lo-rgyus Gter-ston Chos-'byung Nor-bu'i 'Phreng-ba*, made from a ms. in 99 (?) folios. The title of this work, as found in the colophon [fol. 96v.8] is: *Gter-ston Rgya-mtsho'i Rnam-thar Nor-bu'i 'Phreng-ba*. Gter-ston Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje (1615-1672) is mentioned on fol. 91v.4 and Gter-ston Padma-rig-'dzin-rtsal (1625-1697) is mentioned on fol. 90v.3, and further study ought to narrow down the date of this work still further. The fact that these gter-stons of such late date are included here would preclude identifying the present gter-ston history with that of Sha-gzugs-pa, which after all should have a very different title."

Upon closer investigation, however, I believe there is sufficient textual evidence to suggest again that Sha-gzugs-pa, or someone very close to him, was in fact the author of this *gter-ston* history. But since I do not know much about this figure's life I cannot be certain at this stage. As noted, Sha-gzugs-pa is said to have been a student of Ngag-gi-dbang-po. He must then have been closely tied to the Byang-gter tradition. Such a connection is clearly reflected in the manuscript, where we find a strong emphasis on the major Byang-gter associates including Ngag-gi-dbang-po himself (see fol. 90r.2-5). A few lines later, there is explicit reference to the Byang-gter community of E-wam-lcog and 'Phrang-po Rdo-rje-brag (fol. 90r.3-4). Interestingly, on line 4, the author tells us that "nowadays the reincarnation of Ngag-dbang Rig-'dzin-rdo-rje is known as the Rdo-rje-brag incarnation" (*sras ngag-dbang rig-su-'dzin rdo-rje'i sku'i skye-sprul ni / da-lta rdo-rje-brag sprul-pa'i sku zhes*). The first reincarnation of Ngag-gi-dbang-po was Padma-'phrin-las (1641-1717), who at the age of eleven (in 1651) was invited by the fifth Dalai Lama to the monastery of Rdo-rje-brag. Given that the author of this text makes reference to the Rdo-rje-brag incarnation of Ngag-gi-dbang-po, but does not mention Padma-'phrin-las by name, I want to say that the history was probably written sometime before 1651 (the year Padma-'phrin-las was recognized) but no earlier than 1639 (the date of Ngag-gi-dbang-po's death). This could explain why we see references in the body of the text to certain prominent seventeenth century figures, such as the tenth Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje (1605-1674) (fol. 91r.6), Rtse-le Padma-legs-sgrub (1608-1680) (fol. 91v.1), Stag-bla Padma-mati (1591-1637) (fol. 91v.1), and so forth. Now, the question is the reference to Sha-gzugs-pa's history in Sog-bzlog-pa from 1605-06 (see Martin 1997, p. 93, no. 180). We should note that the title of our manuscript is different from the title(s) mentioned in that source, i.e., *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus dpag-bsam rab-rgyas* (or *Chos-'byung phan-bde dpag-bsam rab-tu rgyas-pa'i 'dod-'jo*). Curiously, this is indeed the same title listed under Sha-gzugs-pa's name in the library catalogue of the Potala (see PLKC, p. 480). However, I do not believe that our text could have been written as early as 1605, even if we were to allow for later emendations. Hence, it appears the question of authorship still remains open.

[4]See GTCB, fols. 182.6-185.3. Reprinted in BDTT, vol. 3, part 1, pp. 523-524.

[5]See NBDS, fols. 139.3-6 and 228.4-231.

[6]See RCBP, vol. 1, fols. 524.6-525.6 and 537.3-538.2.

[7]See GJGT, vol. 1, fols. 588.3-589.4.

incomplete cursive (*dbu-med*) manuscript extant in only one recension of the Kar-gling cycle—a work entitled *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol dang thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro las lung-bstan bka'-rgya* [*Revelation Prophecy and Authorizing Order of "The Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities" and "Mahākarūṇa, the Peaceful and Wrathful Lotus"*].[8] Unfortunately, the manuscript is missing its concluding folios, so we have no access to its colophon. But since the prophecy was an integral component of *gter-ma*, or "treasure", revelations in Tibet we can only assume that the *Lung-bstan bka'-rgya* was included among the earliest works attributed to Karma-gling-pa. It is certainly possible that Karma-gling-pa wrote the text himself to authenticate and explain the existence of his textual discoveries. The question of scriptural authenticity was never far from the minds of those Tibetans who came into contact with the so-called "treasure-revealers" (*gter-ston*) and their "treasures". Often suspected of fraud and deceipt these scriptural visionaries were compelled to demonstrate a living connection to authoritative events and personalities in the significant past.[9] In particular, as we shall see below, the *gter-ma* cults in the age of Karma-gling-pa (fourteenth century) usually looked to the extraordinary figure of Padmasambhava, an eighth-century exorcist from O-rgyan (Uḍḍiyāna), who had been invited to Tibet by the emperor Khri-srong-lde-btsan to subdue the malevolent spirits indigenous to that country.

In the details that follow, I have utilized all of the sources above to construct an almost purely descriptive account of the early personalities and events surrounding the *gter-ma* revelations of Karma-gling-pa. Derived as it is from "scriptural" sources that are more or less "carefully contrived ideal paradigms", the picture presented may not be

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[8]In T7, vol. 1, fols. 521-536 (henceforth, LTKG).

[9]Consider, for example, the trials and tribulations of Padma-gling-pa (1450-1521) described in Aris 1988a.

properly *historical* in the usual sense of the term.[10] This, however, should not detract from the overall purpose of the chapter. Here, my primary concern has been to piece together from fragmented and often conflicting sources the traditional story that lies behind the *history* of the Kar-gling transmissions. It is in these ideal literary descriptions that we begin to discover how religious value and meaning were constructed in Tibetan societies.[11] Specifically, our background story offers a glimpse of how some traditional Tibetan historians have envisioned the nature of religious texts and the power of revelation. This vision we shall now proceed to narrate.

1. PROPHECY AND CONCEALMENT OF THE SGAM-PO-GDAR TREASURES

In the Kar-gling *Lung-bstan bka'-rgya*, the collection of texts that make up the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* are claimed to have been originally composed in the eighth century by Padmasambhava. This obscure siddha, who was later to be retroactively identified as the founding father of Tibetan Buddhism and of its most ancient tradition, the Rnying-ma-pa, is believed to have concealed a vast array of texts and religious objects in unusual and remote locations so that they would later be discovered at the appropriate time by some "treasure-hunter" who had been specially mandated as the appointed excavator. These prophecied individuals were known as *gter-ston*, "treasure-revealers". Among the many famous discoverers of these hidden treasures was Karma-gling-pa.

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[10] I borrow these expressions from Gregory Schopen's critique of traditional Buddhist scholarship, see especially Schopen 1997, p. 3. In the use of the term *historical*, I have in mind basic assumptions upon which historical research as a professional discipline has developed in Europe and North America. See, for example, the ideas about history and historiography surveyed in Iggers 1997.

[11] Historians traditionally have tended to look unfavorably upon religious and "spiritual" sources, especially hagiographies, as valid historical documents. In the last few decades, however, there have been movements in historical theory that have recognized the value of such sources for understanding history, and cultural history in particular. See discussions in Lifshitz 1994 and in van Engen 1986. Perhaps in our case the most interesting example of this turn to a more open and pluralistic approach to history would be the work of Aaron Gurevich, who has brought popular religious literature—specifically medieval hagiographies and visionary accounts of the Other World—to the center of his historical focus. See, particularly, Gurevich 1983, 1992, and 1995. We might also mention in this regard the fascinating works of Philippe Ariès (1982), Jacques Le Goff (1984), and Jean-Claude Schmitt (1998).

As a genre, the *gter-ma* constitutes an unquestionably Tibetan class of heterogenous literature which began to appear in Tibet around the eleventh century.[12] Typically understood as concealed apocrypha, the *gter-ma* texts came to be accepted primarily by the Rnying-ma-pa as authentic relics from the golden age of the Tibetan emperors.[13] In addition to creating and sustaining a paradisaic mythology of Tibetan dynastic history—which incidentally could be utilized as a tool for furthering political agendas—many of the *gter-ma* texts introduced new and innovative interpretations of older religious ideas and techniques, or simply popularized in the form of prayer and liturgy what had previously existed only in the clandestine and rarefied atmosphere of elite yogis and scholarly monks. The Snying-thig tradition of Rdzogs-chen, for example, extended its renown in part by circulating its esoteric theories in the form of scriptures claiming to have been excavated from buried sources.[14] These apocryphal statements of doctrine were authenticated by the religious experience of the revealer, whose revelation re-called into being the original intention of Padmasambhava, or some other buddha-like figure in Tibet's glorified past. The *gter-ma* text itself granted direct access to that earlier period when Tibet was powerful and Buddhism was at its zenith. In this way, the *gter-ma* tradition provided a means for producing legitimate scripture outside the limits of the canonical hegemony, in most cases believed to have direct links to India.[15] Indeed, of most relevance in the present context, it is among these hidden treasures that much of Tibet's conceptual and liturgical innovations surrounding death and afterlife can be

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[12]On the early history of the *gter-ma* discoveries, see Dargyay 1979; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991; Thondup 1986; Kapstein 1989; and Germano 1994. A modern example of *gter-ma* discovery is discussed in Germano 1998.

[13]For insightful discussions of the *gter-ma* tradition in general, several pioneering articles by Janet Gyatso deserve special mention. See bibliography for full citations.

[14]See discussion in Chapter 1; cf. also Germano nd(a).

[15]See discussion in Gyatso 1993. On the relationship between canonicity and authenticity in Tibet, especially in light of the issue of ongoing revelation in the Rnying-ma-pa tradition, see Mayer 1996; Germano nd(a). To be sure, the clearest distinction between the Rnying-ma-pa and the other Tibetan schools is the degree to which they accept as valid continuous revelation.

located. Hence, it appears that *gter-ma* was the prime literary mechanism by which the distinctive systems found in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* were first articulated.

Generally speaking, in the *gter-ma* traditions the first moments in the creation and subsequent transmission of the actual "treasure-doctrine" (*gter-chos*) is said to take place in three successive phases, following the traditional mode described for the transmission of the ancient *tantra-s* compiled in the *Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*:

1. The wisdom-mind transmission of the victorious buddhas (*rgyal-ba'i dgongs-brgyud*),
2. The symbolic transmission of the awareness-holders (*rig-'dzin brda'i-brgyud*),
3. The authentic oral transmission of human beings (*gang-zag snyan-khung-du brgyud-pa*).[16]

Since these three modes are employed as the framing narrative in Rgya-ra-ba's *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, we will employ this scheme as a way to organize our discussion below. Briefly, in Rgya-ra-ba's descriptions of the first and second phases in the transmission of the *Zhi-khro* revelations, he does not recount the entire myth but rather summarizes the key features of the standard narrative, beginning with the silent but profound exchanges between the Dharmakāya Samantabhadra, Vajradhāra and Vajrasattva.[17] The second period of the symbolic transmission commences with the blessings of Vajrasattva on the siddha Dga'-rab-rdo-rje. The story of this enigmatic figure is narrated along conventional lines, from his immaculate conception to his meditative exploits at the great charnel ground Bsil-ba'i-tshal or "Cool Grove" (Skt., Sitavana).[18] It is at this famous cemetery

[16]See Gyatso 1998, pp. 158-159; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 447-456; Thondup 1996, pp. 18-22.
[17]LGNB, fols. 28-31. In this mode of transmission, no direct teaching actually takes place since the enlightened mind of the teacher is one and the same with the minds of his disciples.
[18]LGNB, fols. 32-35.

that we are also introduced to the ascetic Srī Siṃha.[19] Using secret signs, Dga'-rab-rdo-rje bestows upon Srī Siṃha the essential meaning of the six million four hundred thousand Rdzogs-chen *tantra-s*. Sometime later, at the charnel ground Sosa-gling (Skt., Sosadvīpa) Padmasambhava, together with the Paṇḍit Vimalamitra and king Jñānasūtra, come to sit respectfully at the feet of Srī Siṃha to receive his blessings. In a burst of pulsating light issuing from a stupa in the center of the charnal ground, the three humble disciples awaken to all the essential points of Rdzogs-chen doctrine.[20] With this last spectacular event, Rgya-ra-ba's account of the first two transmissions comes to a close. The last phase—the authentic oral transmission of human teachers—is the focus of the greater part of the *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*. Quite obviously, it is the third phase that interests us most in this chapter. We begin with an account of the origin of the teaching of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, including the smaller *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*.

The *gter-ma* of Karma-gling-pa, like most literature of this kind, is described as having its literary roots in Tibet's dynastic past. In Janet Gyatso's recent analysis of the *gter-ma* of 'Jig-med-gling-pa (1730-1798), she identifies a distinctive but apparently universal feature of the *gter-ma* myth, noting that the "origin myth is part of the larger narrative cycle that relates the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet".[21] Indeed, the *gter-ma* records frequently contain stories of the emperors Srong-bstan-sgam-po (c.609-650) and Khri-srong-lde-btsan, of the Indian monk-scholar Sāntarakṣita, of the great debates between the Indian "gradualist" Kamalaśīla and the Chinese "subitist" Ho-shang Mahāyāna, or most importantly of the timely arrival of Padmasambhava to clear a space in Tibet's wild domain for the adoption of Buddhism. The profoundly emotional significance of Padmasambhava in the "national memory of Tibetan Buddhists" is beyond dispute, for

[19]LGNB. fols. 35-36.
[20]LGNB. fols. 36-37.
[21]Gyatso 1998, p. 154.

> "...[h]e is given credit for making possible the conversion of the country to Buddhism, a fundamental component of Tibetan identity certainly by the eleventh century. An integral part of that accomplishment, at least according to the Treasure lineages, was the compassion that the Precious Guru directed toward the Tibetans of the future when he concealed special texts and other Treasures for their benefit."[22]

Padmasambhava's concern for the happiness and well-being of future generations is thus identified as the motivating force behind his creation and subsequent concealment of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, and especially the teachings that would later be known as the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. As is typical of the *gter-ma* founding narratives, our story—drawn from the *Lung-bstan bka'-rgya*—begins at the court of the Tibetan emperor Khri-srong-lde-btsan.

The construction of Bsam-yas, the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet, was completed in the late eighth century (probably around 779).[23] To celebrate its successful establishment, the emperor Khri-srong-lde-bstan is said to have invited his queen Tshe-pong, Padmasambhava and his consort Ye-shes-mtsho-rgyal, the translator Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan, and the royal ministers to the Maitreya temple (Byams-pa-gling) at the newly erected monastery. They discussed the extent of the emperor's dominion, the divinity of Tibet, and the fortunes of her people, who had now begun practicing the ten Buddhist virtues (*dge-ba bcu*).[24] Padmasambhava spoke out in a cautionary tone:

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[22]Gyatso 1998, p. 155.

[23]References to this significant landmark are too numerous to mention, but reliable descriptions can be found, for example, in Ferrari 1958, pp. 44-46 and 113-115; Batchelor 1987, pp. 233-244; Dorje 1996, pp. 235-243.

[24]Understood in terms of the renunciation of ten non-virtues (*mi-dge-ba bcu*): (1) murder (*srog-gcod-pa*), (2) theft (*ma-byin-par len-pa*), (3) sexual misconduct (*'dod-pas log-par g.yem-pa*), (4) falsehood (*rdzun-du smra-ba*), (5) slander (*phra-ma*), (6) senseless chatter (*ngag-bkyal-ba*), (7) verbal abuse (*tshig-rtsub-mo*), (8) covetousness (*brnab-sems*), (9) vindictiveness (*gnod-sems*), and (10) holding wrong views (*log-lta*).

> "Alas! Now that the emperor's intentions have been fulfilled, Tibet has become a happy and joyous place, blessed by supreme translators, teachers, and people practicing the ten virtues. But one day, all of these things will fall victim to impermanence and disappear. Generally speaking, all compounded things are impermanent and before long fall apart, especially the divine joys and pleasures of Tibet, which are as transient and fleeting as a colorful rainbow in the sky. Consequently, you should think now about what will happen in the future and examine [your thoughts] very closely."[25]

After Padmasambhava had spoken, the group grew anxious. Respectfully bowing down before the teacher, they offered him gifts and pleaded: "O, Buddha of the three times who has prophetic knowledge of the future, we ask that you give us a prophecy in order to dispel our doubts." Padmasambhava smiled benevolently and from his smile a beam of light radiated out and struck their hearts. The bliss-energy of this magnificent light caused their bodies to tremble and their minds became focused one-pointedly.[26] Padmasambhava then established himself in deep meditative concentration. From within this state, he said:

> "Listen, supreme translators, teachers, royal ministers, and the people of Tibet! Religious laws are impermanent. All leaders will perish [eventually]. As a prophetic sign that the imperial rule is disintegrating, the Tibetan people will no longer heed the emperor, his lawless ministers will disobey him, and no one will be skilled in applying the Buddha's teaching for the welfare of living beings. Who then will gain the merit resulting from the fruition of past enlightened

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[25]LTKG, fols. 523-524: *e ma ho : 'di ltar rgyal po'i thugs dgongs rdzogs byas nas : bod khams bde zhing skyid pa 'di nyid ni : lo paṇ skyes mchog rnams kyis* [524] *byin rlabs dang : bod kyis dge bcu spyad pa'i byin rlabs yin te : nam zhig 'di yang mi rtag 'gyur zhing 'gro : spyir ni 'dus byas thams cad mi rtag cing : ring por mi thogs 'jig pa'i chos can yin : khyad par bod kyi bde skyid lha 'dra 'di : mi rtag 'gyur ba nam kha'i 'ja' tshon 'dra : de ltar slob dpon padma 'byung gnas gyis : phi ma ci 'byung da lta sems la stos.*

[26]LTKG, fol. 524.

> activities? Lhasa, Khra-'brug,[27] and Bsam-yas will be weakened. Manure, meat, and liqour will be stored up in the monasteries, and the Three Jewels will be thrown out like corpses. In particular, loving mothers and fathers will be beaten like criminals [by their own children]. All the religious centers established by the emperor will fall to ruins and the people who live nearby will suffer. One day there will be no religion at all in Tibet. For many years to come, there will be no respectable [leaders] and no [unified] nation. Tibetans will fear the Hor [i.e., Mongolians] and there will be little joy. Tibet's riches will be depleted. O! The Buddha's true teaching [will be handed over to] demons who will pervert the vows. Gradually, [all] will experience fear and terror."[28]

Padmasambhava warned relentlessly of the horrors that awaited Tibet and her people. His focus then turned to the inevitable collapse of the monastic institution and the subsequent distortion of Buddhist doctrine:

> "As an early omen of the breakdown of monastic discipline, a demonic emanation of the serpent-goddess (*klu-mo*) Gangs-bzang Bu-mo-'od-zer will possess the hearts of Tibetan women and male renunciants will become deeply entwined in the five passions.[29] Women will devour malicious gossip like a delicious meal, and sleep around behind their husbands' backs (*smad-tshong*). They will bathe themselves clean and then speak [alluringly] and make flirtatious

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[27]One of the earliest temples in the Yar-lung valley built by Srong-btsan-sgam-po. See Vitali 1990; Dorje 1996, pp. 255-257.

[28]LTKG, fol. 525: *gson cig lo paṇ rgyal blon bod 'bangs rnams : chos khrims mi rtag sde dpon thams cad 'tsho rlag byed : rgyal khrims 'jig rtags rje la 'bangs mi nyan : blon po khrims med rje la kha log byed : 'gro la phan pa'i sangs rgyas bsgrub mkhan med : yon tan 'bras bus bsod nams su la 'byung : lha sa khra 'brug bsam yas 'o re brgyal : gtsug lag khang du lud dang sha chang bsog : phyir yang dgon mchog gsum po mi ro bzhin du dor : sgos ni drin can pha ma dam sri bzhin du brdung : rje yi bzhengs pa'i chos 'khor kun kyang gog : phyogs kyi mi rnams sems can sdug tu 'jug : skabs gcig bod yul du chos med pa yang 'byung : rje med 'bangs med pa yang lo mang du 'byung : skabs gcig bod hor gyi 'jigs pa yang 'byung : long spyod chung zhing 'byor pa zhag du 'gro : kye ma thub pa'i dam chos bstan pa 'di : dam nyams bdud kyi rim par 'jigs pa 'byung.*

[29]Desire (*'dod-chags*), hatred (*zhe-sdang*), delusion (*gti-mug*), pride (*nga-rgyal*), and envy (*phra-dog*).

> gestures. Even though Buddhist doctrine warns that lust is to be avoided, these [enticing] women will appear very attractive to the monks and will satisfy [their desires]. [After becoming pregnant, the women] will nurture their babies. This sort of "religious practitioner" will accumulate sins and the Tibetan people will lose faith in Buddhism. Out of pride, people will seek initiation into the religious life in pursuit of fame and fortune. They will have little compassion and will refuse to obey the rules. Behaving poorly, they will engage in violent and destructive activities. As a result, the dark demonic forces will rejoice and the light divine forces will be defeated, followed by the destruction of the doctrine."[30]

By this point in the story Padmasambhava's audience seems to have grown despondent, for he is said to have exhorted them to seek refuge in the Three Jewels—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Acknowledging the difficulty of disciplined practice, he emphasized the importance of the teacher and then gave them the instructions and initiations for the worship of the lama.[31]

Rgya-ra-ba's account of these prophecies differs slightly from that of the presumably earlier *Lung-bstan bka'-rgya*, suggesting perhaps that the unique elements are of his own invention. In the *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, Rgya-ra-ba relates that the emperor Khri-srong-lde-

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[30]LTKG, fol. 526: *'dul ba'i bstan pa nyams pa'i snga ltas su : klu mo gangs bzang bu mo 'od zer ldan : bdud kyi sprul pa bud med snying la 'jug : log pa'i blo gsal nyon mongs lnga la brtson : phra ma lkog zas bud med rnams kyi zhim lto byed : bud med pho rgyab smad tshong byed pa 'ong : phyi bdar sal sil zur mig byed cing skyes pa 'di : dge slong rnams la snying sdug shar po 'ong : chos pa rnams kyang chags pa bcad do zer : bud med brten cing bu chung gso ba 'byung : chos pa 'di 'dra zer zhing sdig pa gsog : mi rnams chos la dad pa med pa 'byung : chos skor zhugs nas khengs grags 'tshol ba 'byung : snying rje chung zhing khrims la mi gnas shing : log spyod byed cing dmag las byed pa 'byung : de ltar byas pas nag phyogs bdud rigs dga' : dkar phyogs pham nas bstan pa nyams pa 'byung.*

[31]The reference may be to a text found in a vast majority of Kar-gling collections entitled *Sku-gsum bla-ma'i rnal-'byor-gyi gsol-'debs dug-gsum ma-spangs rang-grol*. See B1a, fols. 3-7; B2, fols. 14b.4-15b.2; B3, fols. 1-2; B5; CH, fols. 457-460; DH, fols. 1-5; GK, fols. 49-52; KS, fols. 1-3; NE; PY, fols. 29-31; S1, fols. 1-5; S3; T5; T6, fols. 37-40; T7, vol. 2, fols. 273-276; T8, vol. 1, fols. 29-33; ZH, fols. 23-25. Translated in Thurman 1994, pp. 99-104 and Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 305-307.

btsan, the translator Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan, and the others in the royal entourage offered Padmasambhava a gold and turquoise mandala and in despair asked him to give them a secret teaching that would liberate them in one single lifetime without any effort whatsoever.[32] Padmasambhava responded by offering them a teaching so powerful that it required no practical effort:

> "By simply being heard, this teaching will close the gates leading to rebirth in the lower realms; by simply understanding it, you will depart to the realm of Great Bliss [Sukhāvati]; and by pondering its meaning, you will reach the level of non-regression".[33]

Padmasambhava then warned them about Tibet's dark future, adding that his own doctrines are destined to be misunderstood and slandered by foolish people, and especially by those "unfortunate narrow-minded proponents of the lower vehicle (i.e., hinayāna)".[34] Rgya-ra-ba then reports that Padmasambhava condensed all the Rdzogs-chen teachings into a single abridged scripture, gave it the title *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, and concealed it as a *gter-ma* on Sgam-po-gdar mountain in Dwags-po. In connection with this momentous event, Padmasambhava is said to have offered a prophecy forecasting the future discovery of the treasure.

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[32]LGNB, fols. 37-38.

[33]LGNB, fol. 38: *thos pa tsam gyis ngan song gi skye sgo gcod pa / go ba tsam gyis bde chen gyi sa la bshegs pa / don yid la byed pa rnams ni lhun gyis grub pa'i rig 'dzin phyir mi ldog pa'i sa la gshegs par byed pa.*

[34]LGNB, fol. 38: *gdul bya blo chung theg dman gyi rigs skal med log lta the tshom can gyi blor mi shongs nas slar skur pa 'debs pas ngan song 'phan pas na.* It is interesting that Rgya-ra-ba offers here justification for the secrecy of the *gter-ma*, citing the potential for misunderstanding and subsequent abuse as the main reason behind Padmasambhava's insistence on keeping his words secret. Curiously, he seems particularly hostile to followers of the so-called "Hinayāna", or *theg-dman*, although it is not clear exactly who or what he is referring to by this common Buddhist doxological term. Was this statement intended to be contextualized philosophically within traditional scholastic lines of inquiry, or it was actually a product of Rgya-ra-ba's own personal conflicts with scholars of his day?

This prophecy is found, in varied form, in both the *Lung-bstan bka'-rgya* and the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*. In the former account, the prophecy is made in reference not to the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* as we might expect, but rather to the other *Zhi-khro* cycle of Karma-gling-pa, the obscure *Thugs-rje-chen-po padma zhi-khro*. The significance of this attribution is not clear, but it is noteworthy that evidence exists suggesting that these two *Zhi-khro* treasures may have been conflated with one another very early in the history of the tradition. Perhaps the confusion may have been the result of the similarity in content of the two cycles (see discussion below).[35] In the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*, the prophecy is stated as follows:

> "In order to preserve and maintain for [future] dissemination this profound teaching called *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, I have hidden it as a precious treasure. Alas! O noble children! The fortunate one who is destined to uncover this teaching will come endowed with a beautiful silver body, mournful (*smra-'don*), and in wrathful form. At times he will be as ill-tempered as a brute and at other times appear in the form of an aimless child.[36] O! This noble son will be surrounded by divine mothers and ḍākiṇīs. With great power of faith, insight, and sharp intelligence he will appear in a dragon or snake year with a glorious name in the form of an independently-minded hero (*mi-sems mi-'dzin dpa'-po*). This very being [will be the incarnation of] the translator Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan. By connecting up with this [fortunate one] my doctrine will become priceless. By being both seen and heard, this teaching will put an end to the cycle of existence.

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[35] In this regard, consider the revealing comment in GKCB, pp. 457-458: *'on kyang bar do* [458] *drug khrid sogs ni zhi khro gnyis thun mong yin la dbang dang gdams zab gzhan rnams chig brgyud mdzad.*

[36] *res 'ga' ngam nag glan pa lta bu la / res 'ga' gtad med byis pa'i rnam pa can.* The expression "aimless child" (*gtad-med byis-pa*) carries the sense of living openly without fixating on predetermined goals. This is a description that is frequently applied to wandering yogis and other such religious visionaries.

> The revealer of the treasure will come to have ten disciples gathered around him."[37]

In the *Lung-bstan bka'-rgya*, a troubling future is forecasted for this scripture-revealer:

> "...[he will be] white in color, sweet-smelling, with beautiful eyes, and a longish nose. Smiling, he will be like the long and slow movements of the Khyung bird's wings [?].[38] In the year of the mouse he will serve as protector for all living beings. He will be handsome and, as a sign of his enlightened mind, will have a mole on his right thigh. This good person will have a glorious name and will either come from Nyang, Kong-po, or Khams. Not before the teaching of a thousand Buddhas is complete will the teaching of this leader of beings named "Karma" be exhausted. [Whoever] venerates him will be born in the realm of Great Bliss [Sukhāvati], and [whoever] has a spontaneous visionary understanding of only a portion of his teaching will certainly purify their karmic obscurations within seven rebirths. His enlightened mind will be an emanation of Avalokiteśvara's and his liberation is certain. As lord he will surely serve as protector of his Tibetan followers. Wherever they happen to be, that place will be full of luxury. [However], some disruptive demon will create a sudden danger. Perilous obstructions will originate from within this fortunate one's own circle.

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[37]TMLG, fol. 66a: *zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol 'di / spel bar 'phang pas rin chen gter du sba e ma / 'di nyid 'don pa'i skal ldan rigs kyi bu / mdog dkar gzugs mdzes smra 'don khro bo'i dbyibs / res 'ga' ngam nag glan pa lta bu la / res 'ga' gtad med byis pa'i rnam pa can / ma dang mkha' 'gro 'du ba'i rigs kyi bu / dad pa stobs che shes rab dbang po rno / mi sems mi 'dzin dpa' bo'i tshul 'dzin pa / 'brug sprul lo pa dpal gyi ming can 'byung / de nyid lo tstsha klu'i rgyal mtshan yin / 'di dang 'phrad kyis chos la zong ma byed / mthong thos 'brel pas 'khor ba mtha' can yin.* Cf. also LTKG, fol. 533; GKCB, p. 457.

[38]*ring zhing ldem bag dal bus khyung [g]shog bgros.* My guess is that this is an archaic idiomatic expression meaning graceful and sagacious.

> [In the year of] the iron pig, beware of the violator of the samaya vows, the defilement of the black one![39]

In Rgya-ra-ba's version, Padmasambhava offers only this prayer to the appointed revealer of the hidden text(s):

> "Alas! The pinnacle of all the teachings [is this *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*],
> It is the supreme essence of all unexcelled secrets,
> The method that liberates into great bliss those who suffer.
> It is the spontaneous attainment of manifest buddhahood right now,
> It is the meaningful essence of the wisdom of the victorious buddhas of the three times.
> This condensed elixir is like the refined essence of butter.
> It was concealed by Padmasambhava of O-rgyan,
> As a precious treasure to be written, but not disseminated, for the benefit of future generations.
> At the end of the [degenerate] age when the lifespan is only fifty years,
> All those who do not possess instructions such as these,
> Will without doubt go to the lower realms.
> For the benefit of sentient beings living in degenerate times,
> I put this teaching in writing and concealed it at Sgam-po mountain.

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[39]LTKG, fols. 527-528: *mdog dkar dri zhim spyan gyi dbang po mdzas : shangs kyi dbyibs mtho cung zad zhal 'dzum pa : ring zhing ldem bag dal bus khyung [g]shog bgros : byi ba'i lo pa 'gro ba'i skyabs gcig po : byang sems yin rtags brla g.yas rme bas mdzas : bzang po'am ni dpal gyi ming can gcig : nyang kong phyogs sam khams kyis phyogs nas 'ong : sangs rgyas stong gi bstan pa ma rdzogs bar : 'gro 'dren karma'i* [528] *bstan pa rdzogs mi 'gyur : 'di la bdud byed bde ba can du skye : skad cig cha shas 'di yi zhal mthong bas : skye ba bdun gyis las sgrib nges par dag : thugs rje chen po'i sprul pa byang chub sems : nges par 'byung rjes bod 'bangs skyobs par nges : 'di nyid gang du gnas kyang long spyod 'du : bdud gyi bar cad glo bur ye 'brog 'byung : 'khor gyi nang nas bar chad brtsams byed pa : dam nyams lcags phag nag po grib zon gyis.*

> At some point during the degenerate age, my supreme and worthy heart-son will come.
>
> His father will be a siddha named Nyi-zla.[40]
>
> He, who will be called Karma-gling-pa, will have religious courage.
>
> As a sign of his revelatory pristine wisdom, his right thigh will be marked with a mole.
>
> [He will be born] in a dragon or snake year into a heroic lineage possessed of good karma. May this teaching connect up with this fortunate being.[41]

In the *Bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rim-pa*, the early sixteenth-century history by Rgya-ra-ba's student, Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan, Padmasambhava speaks of the transmission of the *gter-ma* itself, which according to this source had in fact been divided into two separate collections—the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and the *Thugs-rje-chen-po padma zhi-khro*. We are told that the first collection was not to be revealed to others, "not even to the wind itself",[42] for at least three generations. Padmasambhava warned of serious complications if the doctrines were disclosed before the appropriate time.[43] On the contrary, the second text cycle, the *Padma zhi-khro*, was to be immediately distributed to the *gter-ston's* most qualified disciples. This collection, however, was also to be kept secret by those students until the third generation. Once the third generation disciple(s)

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[40]Tib., *ming-can*, lit.,"name-possessor, one who has a name" or more idiomatically speaking, "famous", like the English "make a name for yourself".

[41]LGNB, fols. 39-40: *e ma chos rnams kun gyi mthar thug pa / yang gsang bla med kun gyi snying po mchog / sdug bsngal bde ba chen por grol ba'i thabs / da lta mngon par sangs rgyas rang thob yin / dus gsum rgyal ba'i dgongs pa snying po'i don / bcud bsdus mar gyi snying po yang zhun 'di / bdag 'dra o rgyan padma 'byung gnas gyis / phyi rabs 'gro ba rnams kyi don du bkod / su la ma spel rin chen gter du sbas / ma 'ongs snyigs ma dus kyi tha ma la / lnga bcu khar la dus kyi tha ma'i dus / de dus 'di 'dra'i* [40] *gdams pa med pa kun / ngan song gnas su 'gro bar the tshom med / de phyir snyigs ma'i sems can la phan phyir / yi ger btab nas sgam po'i ri la sbas / de dus snying gi bu mchog skal ldan gcig / pha la grub thob nyi zla'i ming can 'byung / karma gling pa zhes bya snying stobs can / brla g.yas sme ba ye shes spyan drangs mtshan / 'brug sbrul lo pa las kyis dpa' po'i rigs / skal ldan skye bu de dang 'di 'phrad shog*. Cf. also OGTL, fols. 22-23; GKCB, p. 457.

[42]This expression is apparently quite common in *gter-ma* literature, see Gyatso 1998, p. 168.

[43]OGTL, fol. 23.

had received the transmission the texts were again to remain secret for a specified number of years.[44] Only after seven years, for example, could the seal be broken on the *Bar-do thos-grol*, which presumably was drawn from both *Zhi-khro* cycles. The *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, on the other hand, could be propagated only after a period of nine years, but then not all at once.[45] Although there are several traditional reasons offered as explanation for this peculiar fixation on secrecy and the almost obsessive preoccupation with the precise year in which the *gter-ma* is to be transmitted,[46] I tend to agree with Janet Gyatso when she suggests that all of this seems "to reflect an anxiety within the tradition about a proliferation of Treasures and an attempt to regulate their formulation".[47] It is as if these texts were threatened from every angle, and such precautionary measures were of paramount importance for their continued survival. Perhaps this was the guarded response of a perceived antagonism, real or imagined, directed against those groups that openly accepted the authority of the ideas and practices contained in these treasures.

Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan's own version of the transmission prophecy differs remarkably from a similar passage found in Rgya-ra-ba's *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*. Statements styled as ancient divine prophecy in the former appear in the latter to have been simply the recorded injunctions of Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje to the lama Nyi-zla'-od-zer. In this version of events, Nyi-zla-chos-rje, rather than Padmasambhava, enjoins that the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* is to be kept secret for six years (rather than seven), and that the smaller text cycle *'Og-sgo bde-chen* is to be silently practiced for ten.[48] No

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[44]The sources are not consistent with regard to the total number of years required for these teachings to be held under seal. In several cases, the number six is given rather than seven. See TMLG, fol. 65b; GKCB, p. 459; NBDS, fol. 231.
[45]OGTL, fol. 24.
[46]See Thondup 1986, pp. 161-162.
[47]Gyatso 1998, p. 169.
[48]LGNB, fol. 42. We may recall that the *'Og-sgo bde-chen* belongs to the completion-stage "path of means" (*thabs-lam*) genre, and as such describes techniques of sexual yoga aimed at generating the four types of bliss. In the Kar-gling tradition, these texts tend to be affiliated with the teachings of Nyi-zla-'od-zer. See discussion in Chapter 2.

mention is made of either the *Padma zhi-khro* or the *Bar-do thos-grol*. We see other examples of Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan's stylistic and literary elaboration when he writes below of the future transmission of the Kar-gling *gter-ma*.

Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan relates that, according to prophecy, in a future degenerate age the teachings would first appear in the southeastern regions of Dwags-po and lower Kong-po, and then become concentrated in areas such as Long-po, Brag-po, and upper Kong-po (in the district today known as Sman-gling).[49] According to Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan, Padmasambhava declared that due to certain negative forces very few Tibetans would understand the *gter-ma* doctrine and so the people would slander it with all sorts of false claims and distorted interpretations (just one more reason for secrecy). Nevertheless, a small group of clandestine yogins would succeed in perfecting its practice. These individuals would be abused and persecuted by demons, but to no avail. The guardian spirits (*srung-ma*) charged by Padmasambhava to protect this *gter-ma*, the "transmitted precepts of Dwags-lha Sgam-po", would ensure that they were entrusted to the proper beneficiary. Finally, he proclaimed that from this fortunate scripture-revealer the teaching would be spread in a succession of single one-to-one transmissions (*gcig-brgyud*) from teacher to student.[50]

The detail provided here by Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan is noteworthy, particularly his identification (in the voice of Padmasambhava) of the specific regions of Tibet where the Kar-gling *gter-ma* would be most active. In Rgya-ra-ba's account, we read that Padmasambhava simply prophecied a spread of the *gter-ma* "throughout the northern region". The actual names of Tibetan districts in this general area, however, are noticeably

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[49]OGTL, fol. 24: *gter 'di lho kong dwags po'i yul du thon : 'gro don byang kong brag long yul du 'grim*. For a brief discussion of these regions in Tibet, see Ferrari 1958, pp. 48, 105, and 121n.203-204, n.209, n.210; Wylie 1962, pp. 94 and 175n.559; Uray 1988; Dorje 1996, pp. 293-298; Karmay 1998, pp. 211-227.

[50]OGTL, fols. 24-25.

absent.[51] So then why do place names appear in Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan's version of the prophecy? The answer would appear to be historical. By the time Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan had begun to compose his short history of the Kar-gling transmission its practices had already begun to be spread from his teacher's home region of lower Kong-po. The convenient fact that Padmasambhava was said to have previously predicted that this movement would take place simply reflects the author's conviction in the *gter-ma's* validity and provides a rationale for its continued transmission. Indeed, we do know that the area of the earliest diffusion of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* were those parts of Tibet indicated in this text. It is certain that the *gter-ma* of Karma-gling-pa originated in Dwags-po and, for a relatively long period after its discovery, remained and was fostered in the general vicinity of Long-po and Kong-po. It was only after Rgya-ra-ba's institutionalization of its practices, sometime in the late fifteenth century, that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* then found its way to other regions of Tibet (see discussion below).

In the preceding descriptions of the various prophecies proclaimed at the court of the emperor Khri-srong-lde-btsan, we have established a general context for our investigations into the history of Karma-gling-pa's textual tradition. These prophetic declarations of Padmasambhava introduce a number of intriguing problems that we will consider below. Before commenting on specific points, however, we should first continue our narrative by introducing the biographies of the principal players in the early history of the *Zhi-khro* transmissions. We begin with Karma-gling-pa's father, the accomplished visionary Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas.

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[51] LGNB, fol. 42.

2. THE TREASURE OF BLACK MANDALA LAKE

We read in the history of Guru Bkra-shis that, in the presence of Khri-srong-lde-btsan and his royal entourage, Padmasambhava not only spoke of a discoverer named Karma but also introduced the prophecy of the coming of one who would be known as Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, "Sun-Moon Buddha" (elsewhere known as Dngos-grub, the "Siddha").[52] The author of the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* intreprets the following prophetic statement as a reference to this obscure scripture-revealer:

> "In the year of the sheep, there will come one bearing the name Dngos-grub,
> With big eyes and a prominent forehead,
> Intelligent, hardworking, faithful, and courageous.
> As a sign of his [good] karma, he will be handsome with a mole on his belly.
> By virtue of these [qualities] he will nurture and protect the lama's complete liberation.[53]

In Guru Bkra-shis we learn that Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas was born in Dwags-po as the rebirth of Khri-srong-lde-bstan's royal minister Nyi-ma. According to a legend described here, Nyi-ma had mysteriously set fire to his own house, killing a number of people and destroying the family's herd of livestock. As a result, he accumulated a mass of negative karma and was afflicted by great suffering. Speaking on his behalf, the emperor asked Padmasambhava for a religious practice that would purify the minister's sins. Instantly, Padmasambhava traveled magically to Sukhāvati and met personally with the Buddha Amitābha, who gave him the instructions called *Gdams-zab 'pho-ba 'ja'-gzugs-ma*

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[52]GKCB, p. 480.
[53]TMLG, fol. 66a: *yos kyi lo pa dngos grub ming can cig / mig ni che zhing dpral ba'i dbyibs mtho ba / shes rab btson 'grus dad dang snying rus can / las can rtags su lto bar rme bas mdzes / de nyid dbang gis bla ma'i rnam thar skyong*. Cf. also LTKG, fol. 535.

[Profound Instructions on the Rainbow Body Transference].[54] Padmasambhava drew blood from the middle finger of his left hand and copied down Amitābha's instructions on a palm leaf. Afterwards, he placed the parchment leaves sequentially in five caskets (*sgrom*) made of gold, silver, turquoise, crystal, and iron and concealed them in a mandala-shaped lake behind Sgam-po mountain in Dwags-po.[55] As a boon, the royal minister offered Padmasambhava the "golden sun and silver moon".[56] Pleased that the circumstances surrounding this offering were genuinely auspicious, Padmasambhava prophecied that Amitābha's *gter-ma* would be discovered in the future by one named Sun-Moon, Nyi-zla.[57]

Both Guru Bkra-shis and Kun-bzang-nges-don relate that sometime in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century a *gter-ston* by the name of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas extracted from the Black Mandala Lake (*mtsho maṇḍala nag-po*) in Dwags-po a hidden cycle of instructions on consciousness transference (*'pho-ba*)[58] and offered them as a gift

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[54]GKCB, p. 480. A version of this work can be found in RCTD, vol. 32, pp. 547-599. The work is known by a variety of titles—*'Pho-ba 'ja'-tshugs-ma, 'Pho-ba 'jag-zug-ma*. The latter title, meaning "planting the stalk", refers to the practice of placing a blade of grass in the hole that forms at the crown of the head induced by the successful practice of transference. This spelling is the one Matthew Kapstein accepts in Kapstein 1998, p. 180n.23. Evidently, this *gter-ma* of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas lies at the center of the pilgrimage festivities of the famous *'Bri-gung 'Pho-ba chen-mo* celebration first established by Rin-chen-phun-tshogs (1509-1557) and later instituted by the brothers Dkon-mchog-rin-chen (1590-1654) and Rig-'dzin-chos-grags (1595-1659). As we shall see in the next chapter, the 'Bri-gung hierarch Rin-chen-phun-tshogs was also a leading figure in the transmission of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*.

[55]Toni Huber has recently discussed the symbolic and ritual significance of the mandala lake in relation to the sacred mountains of Tibet: "In the ancient Tibetan worldview and the folk tradition, lakes—along with mountain peaks—are the most significant type of landscape feature, and the two are often considered together as a gendered pair (commonly male mountain, female lake) forming an ideal unit of sacred geography. They are a dwelling place of both the collective and personal vitality or life force principle (*la*), and their waters produce and provide both visionary and physical access to other dimensions of space and time." Huber 1999, p. 51. Huber later implies that relatively easy physical access to these lakes—as opposed to the high summit of the mountains—have guaranteed their popularity as potent pilgrimage sites.

[56]*gser gyi nyi ma dang dngul gyi zla ba phul ba*. I would guess that this might mean Nyi-ma heaped upon Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas a mass of precious gifts.

[57]GKCB, p. 480. This expression "sun-moon" (*nyi-zla*) occurs prominently in the names of the first three lineage-holders of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma*.

[58]In the *Deb-ther sngon-po*, we find reference to another *gter-ma* recovered from this lake, Maṇḍal nag-po, which is said to be located behind Sgam-po monastery. Evidently, this treasure had been concealed by Sgam-po-pa himself, and was extracted by his own disciple Dung-tsho-ras-pa between the years 1315-1316. The precise content of this *gter-ma* is not specified. See Roerich 1949, pp. 718-719.

to the serpent-king Gtsug-na-rin-chen.[59] So powerful was this *gter-ma*, we are told, that all the spirits and creatures living in the lake were said to be able to attain buddhahood simply by practicing its techniques. We also learn that Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas discovered a marvelous statue of the eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara in the Turquoise Lake (*g.yu-mtsho*) at Tsa-ri.[60] According to Guru Bkra-shis, this statue could still be seen in the southern region of Gnyal.[61]

We know relatively little about the life of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas. In the *gsan-yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama, however, we read that he had been a student of the second Zhwa-dmar-pa Mkha'-spyod-dbang-po (1350-1405),[62] which would place him in the late fourteenth century.[63] This apparent connection to the Karma Kaṃ-tshang tradition may explain why Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas's son was named Karma-gling-pa—the generic prefix "Karma" has traditionally been the ordination name for followers of the Karma Bka'-brgyud order.[64] In addition, as we shall see in the next chapter, this early affiliation may also help explain the fact that several other important Zhwa-dmar-pa hierarchs played active roles as teachers of some of the key holders of the Kar-gling transmissions, and the important monasteries that maintained its rituals shared close alliances with the Karma-pa tradition, e.g, Dwags-

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[59]GKCB, p. 480; NBDS, fol. 139. This *klu* is mentioned by name in a list of deities from a Bon-po manuscript entitled *Bon-po'i lha-bsangs*. See Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, p. 324. A *klu* by the name of Gtsug-na is said to be the father of 'Gog-bza', mother of the famous Gesar of Gling. See Karmay 1998, p. 489.

[60]This is the most important mandala lake of Dag-pa shel-ri, "Pure Crystal Mountain". See Huber 1999, *passim*, esp. pp. 28-29, 51-52, and 61-71.

[61]GKCB, p. 480. On Gnyal see Ferrari 1958, pp. 51 and 126n.258; and Wylie 1962, pp. 93, 96 and 174n.546.

[62]On whom see LRCB, pp. 302-303. He was said to have founded in Kong-po the monastery of Dga'-ldan-ma-mo. GKCB, p. 961.

[63]See DLSY , vol. 3, fol. 429.1-3. The names appear in a lineage for Padma-las-'brel-rtsal's *Sgab-'dre'i 'khor-lo dang bcas-pa phyag-len dum-'khrid*. The complete lineage is listed as follows: Gter-ston Rin-chen-tshul-rdor [=Padma-las-'brel-rtsal, b.1228], Grub-chen Legs-ldan-pa [=Shwa-ban Rgyal-sras Legs-pa, 1290-1366], Mtshungs-med Rang-byung-rdo-rje [=Karma-pa III, 1284-1339], Mkhas-grub Nor-bu-bzang-po, Sprul-sku Mkha'-spyod-dbang-po [=Zhwa-dmar-pa II, 1350-1405], Chos-rje Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, De-dbon Nyi-zla-chos-rje, Bla-ma Nyi-ma-zla-ba [=Nyi-zla-'od-zer, b.1409/1421], Drin-can Kumāratha [=Kumārādza ?], Drin-can Yadyavajra, Lha-sras Rnam-sprul 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen-phun-tshogs, Ras-chung Rnam-sprul Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho, and G.yu-sgra'i sprul-pa Kun-dga'-tshe-mchog.

[64]Smith 1970a, p. 56.

po Rtse-le Gong-'og and Kong-po Thang-'brog (see discussion below). This is not surprising since in this period the regions surrounding Dwags-po and Kong-po were strongholds of that school, particularly of the Zhwa-dmar-pa and Dpa'-bo subsects.

In any case, Kun-bzang-nges-don claims that Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas assisted his son in uncovering concealed *gter-ma* from Sgam-po-gdar mountain in Dwags-po. As we have seen, this small detail apparently led to a minor confusion surrounding the proper identity of the revealer of both the *Thugs-rje-chen-po padma zhi-khro* and a teaching entitled *Bla-ma sku-gsum* [Three-Bodied Teacher], which is perhaps an abbreviated title for the *Sku-gsum bla-ma'i rnal-'byor*.[65] In Guru Bkra-shis, the story goes that one day Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas seemed to disappear into thin air, but had actually traveled magically to the celestial Copper-colored Mountain (*zangs- mdog dpal-ri*) to meet personally with Padmasambhava. At this splendid site he received teachings on the special practice of consciousness transference (*'pho-ba*).[66] It was this teaching in the form of a hidden treasure that was mistakenly identified as the *Padma zhi-khro*. Guru Bkra-shis argues against this identification, claiming that the *Padma zhi-khro* could not have been discovered solely by Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas because the historical sources say it was found by Karma-gling-pa.[67] It is still possible, however, that Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas may have helped his son extract and distribute this teaching, and in fact Guru Bkra-shis notes that the doctrinal lineage (*chos-brgyud*) of this *gter-ma* appears to have been spread more by

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[65]GKCB, pp. 480-481.

[66]In the fifth Dalai Lama's *gsan-yig*, there are two transmissions of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas's *gter-ma*: one which had been transmitted in writing (*'Pho-ba 'jag-tshugs-ma'i nyams-'khrid yi-ge'i lung*) and another which had not (*'Pho-ba 'jag-tshugs-ma shin-tu zab-pa'i nyams-'khrid yi-ger ma-'khod*), meaning instead that it had been transmitted magically, perhaps as a pure vision (*dag-snang*) as Gter-bdag-gling-pa seems to suggest. See DLSY , vol. 3, fols. 175.3-176.4; TLSY, fol. 390. Presumably, the former transmission is the one Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas discovered at Black Mandala Lake, while the latter is the teaching he received directly from Padmasambhava.

[67]GKCB, p. 480-481: *bla ma sku gsum dang / padma zhi khro'i skor bton pa yin zer ba 'dug kyang nges pa mi snang ste padma zhi khro ni karma* [481] *gling pa'i gter chos yin no.*

Karma-gling-pa's father than it was by Karma-gling-pa himself.[68] In the unfortunate absence of the text in question the issue remains a mystery. Nevertheless, this latter suggestion is indeed compelling, since Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas is said to have lived to be an extremely old man, thereby long outliving his son.[69]

3. GTER-STON KARMA-GLING-PA, OR THE STRANGE CASE OF THE POISONED VISIONARY

In accordance with the prophetic declaration of Padmasambhava, the eighth century translator Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan was reborn as the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa in the fourteenth century in a town called Khyer-grub in eastern Dwags-po.[70] As noted, Karma-gling-pa was the eldest son of the treasure-hunting siddha Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas. At fifteen, we are told, Padmasambhava's prophecy and the auspicious connections (*rten-'brel*) converged and Karma-gling-pa excavated a series of *gter-ma* from Sgam-po-gdar mountain, northeast of the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastery of Dwags-lha Sgam-po. These discoveries comprised two major literary collections, the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and the *Thugs-rje-chen-po padma zhi-khro*. In some of the later histories a third work was also said to be included, the *Mgon-po sde-brgyad* [*The Eight Classes of Dharma Lords*].[71] We can only presume that Karma-gling-pa held on to these *gter-ma* for some time before presenting them to others, for by the time he is said to have begun spreading

[68]GKCB, p. 481: *'on kyang gter ston 'di'i sras gter ston karma gling pa yin pas / de'i gter 'don pa'i grogs kyang mdzad cing / chos brgyud kyang yab 'di las kyang 'phel bar snang ngo.*
[69]He is said to have lived for at least one hundred and twenty years. See LGNB, fol. 41; OGTL, fol. 22; TMLG, fol. 66b; GKCB, p. 481; NBDS, fol. 139; RCBP, fol. 525; BDTT, p. 441.
[70]LGNB, fol. 40; TMLG, fol. 65a; GTCB, fol. 182; GKCB, p. 457; NBDS, fol. 228; RCBP, fol. 537; GJGT, fol. 588; BDTT, p. 523. According to a prophecy reported in Rgya-ra-ba's *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba* (fol. 40.3), Karma-gling-pa was to be born in either the dragon or snake year (*'brug-sbrul-lo*). Guru Bkra-shis reports that Karma-gling-pa was born sometime during the sixth *rab-byung*, which corresponds to the period 1327-1387. See GKCB, p. 597; cf. also discussion in Back 1987, p. 18. Within that cycle the dragon and snake match the years 1328-29, 1352-53, 1364-65, and 1376-77. Unfortunately, the exact date of Karma-gling-pa's birth cannot be decided at present without more precise details. It is almost certain, nonetheless, that the dates 1356-1405 offered without reference to a source in Reynolds 1989, p. 3 (and later repeated in both Samuel 1993, p. 503, and Prats 1996, p. 14) cannot be accepted.
[71]TMLG, fol. 65a; GTCB, fol. 182; NBDS fols. 228-229; BDTT, p. 523.

them he had already attracted a sizeable group of disciples—an unlikely feat for a fifteen year old boy.

According to Guru Bkra-shis, Karma-gling-pa presented the *Padma zhi-khro* to fourteen of his most qualified students, while at the same time severely restricting the circulation of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. In this he was merely following the mandates set by Padmasambhava in the prophecies discussed above, relating to the proper transmission of the *gter-ma*.[72] Evidently, he did distribute more freely a special set of bardo instructions drawn from both *Zhi-khro* cycles—this was the *Bar-do drug-khrid*. But, as Guru Bkra-shis is quick to emphasize, the other teachings and initiations specific to the *Zhi-khro gongs-pa rang-grol* were given only to one person as a single transmission.[73]

Presumably, the *Bar-do drug-khrid* mentioned in this context became the work known to us as *Rdzogs-rim bar-do drug-gi khrid-yig*, or simply *Nyams-khrid dgongs-pa rang-grol* [*Self-Liberated Wisdom-Mind: The Experiential Instructions*], which is extant in only one recension of the Kar-gling collection.[74] This significant set of short yogic manuals draws heavily upon the Snying-thig techniques of the Rdzogs-chen system. Although its colophon indicates that the collection was one of Karma-gling-pa's original revealed works,[75] I am of the opinion that the texts may actually have been written in the mid-fifteenth century by Nyi-zla-'od-zer, student of Karma-gling-pa's son Nyi-zla-chos-rje. As we mentioned briefly in Chapter 2, the fact that Nyi-zla-'od-zer is the only disciple

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[72]GKCB, p. 457; cf. also B3, fol. 62.

[73]GKCB, p. 457-458.

[74]T7, vol. 2, fols. 303-432; Gyatrul Rinpoche & Wallace 1998, pp. 83-273.

[75]T7, vol. 2, fol. 432.1-2: *grub thob karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas bton pa'o / gcig brgyud du byas nas / guru nyi zla 'od zer la zab chos 'di'i bdag por bka' babs pa'o*. Karma-gling-pa is also the implied author of the *Bar-do drug-khrid* in the *gsan-yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama, Gter-bdag-gling-pa, Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal, and Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che. See DLSY, fol. 89.1; TLSY, fol. 389.2; ZDTY, fols. 510.5-511.2; DJTY, fol. 175.5.

explicitly named as recipient of this transmission leads me to believe he must have had a major hand in the production of the texts themselves, either as author, editor, or compiler. If this is true, then it is likely that Nyi-zla-'od-zer was working from Karma-gling-pa's original instructions transmitted to him, in some form or another, by the *gter-ston's* son. In this regard, Nyi-zla-'od-zer may have been preserving for the first time in writing the oral lineage leading back directly to Karma-gling-pa himself.[76]

The fact that some of the most significant of Karma-gling-pa's bardo instructions were found in both the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and the *Padma zhi-khro* collections is interesting in that it suggests that the latter cycle was also an important source for teachings on death and afterlife. In this context, recall that the *Padma zhi-khro* had been mistakenly conflated with the instructions on consciousness transference (*'pho-ba*) transmitted in a vision from Padmasambhava to Karma-gling-pa's father. The one text we have that identifies itself as belonging to this elusive corpus is devoted entirely to the postmortem drama of the *srid-pa bar-do*, "bardo of rebirth".[77] This text, entitled *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i gdams-pa srid-pa bar-do rang-grol* [*Self-Liberation of the Bardo of Rebirth: Instructions on "The Presentation of the Natural Form of Virtue and Vice in the Bardo of Rebirth"*] describes the final period of the deceased's wandering in the bardo and presents an account of judgement before the

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[76]Additional evidence supporting Nyi-zla-'od-zer's role as custodian and redactor of the *Bar-do drug-khrid* teachings comes to us in the form of a short introductory text which he wrote for his student Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho—the *Nyams-khrid dgongs-pa rang-grol-gyi sa-bcad lde-mig rang-grol*. See T7, vol. 2, fols. 255-265. This work lays out the entire content of the *Bar-do-drug-gi khrid-yig* in a simple outline format arranged topically beginning with the preliminary practices (*sngon-'gro*) and followed by a succession of details for each of the six bardo periods, from the *skye-gnas bar-do* through the *srid-pa bar-do*. The language of the text is so closely identical to that of the larger work upon which it is based that the framework of the *Bar-do khrid-yig* can almost be reconstructed verbatim from the outline—a fact that suggests the consistent hand of a single author, or at least intimate knowledge of a pre-existing written document. In light of the evidence reviewed above, the conclusion that Nyi-zla-'od-zer composed both texts appears almost decisive.

[77]On the identity of possible texts belonging to Karma-gling-pa's *Thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro*, see Chapter 2, note 4.

magistrate Gshin-rje Chos-kyi-rgyal-po, the Lord of the Dead.[78] It has been suggested that this text, representing a sort of morality play, may lie at the center of the popular Bhutanese dance of the judgement of the dead, called *rakṣa-mang-'chams*, "dance of many rakṣa" (also *rakṣa-mar-'chams*, "dance of the rakṣa from below").[79]

Although it appears that the two *Zhi-khro* cycles discovered by Karma-gling-pa each included teachings on the bardo, the actual organized set of such teachings called *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* seem to have been derived solely from the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.[80] As we observed in Chapter 2, questions concerning the historical identity of this popular collection introduces some rather complicated problems. Likewise, the legends surrounding the transmission of these textual treasures are also complex. The story is a bizarre blend of distorted connections, woeful inexperience, and murder. The tale is not

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[78]See B1, fols. 171-188; B1a, fols. 499-533; B4; DH, fols. 403-437. Tranlated in Tucci 1972, pp. 189-205. A supplement to this work by Rgya-ra-ba is still extant—the *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i lhan-thabs* [=*Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod-kyi lhan-thabs dbyangs-snyan lha'i gaṇdhe*]. Included in B1, fols. 189-196; B1a, fols. 535-549; B4; DH, fols. 439-453; T3; T7, vol. 3, fols. 163-173.

[79]This is performed during the religious festival known as *Tshes-bcu*. See 'Cham-dpon Nag-'phel (1909-1976), *'Brug-gzhung 'cham-gyi bshad-pa* and *Lho-tsang dang nags-mo'i ljongs-kyi 'cham-yig kun-gsal me-long*. This was also suggested to me by Lawrence Epstein (personal communication of July 1998) and later reaffirmed independently by both Françoise Pommaret and Gyurme Dorje (e-mail communications of September 11, 1998 and May 13, 1999, respectively). In Pommaret's study of the *'das-log*, she writes about the sources of this famous *danse macabre*: "Au Bhoutan, cette danse est extrêmement populaire et la tradition en attribue l'origine à Karma-gling-pa, le célèbre <gter-ston> dont il a déjà été question. On se souvient en particulier que ce <gter-ston> avait dû exercer une influence déterminante sur les récits de <'das-log> grâce à son texte du Bar-do-thos-grol. Or, de même que l'on trouve dans le Bar-do-thos-grol et les récits de <'das-log> une partie qui traite du jugement des morts, c'est-à-dire de la rétribution des actes après la mort, la danse qui aurait été inspirée par les écrits de Karma-gling-pa est consacrée à ce thème." Pommaret 1989, p. 117.

According to Gyurme Dorje, the drama is also performed regularly in Tibet, at all of the monasteries (and nunneries) that still foster the Kar-gling tradition. As an example, he cites the Zho-stod Ti-sgro nunnery near 'Bri-gung. It is interesting, but not suprising, that this institution has continued to maintain an active Kar-gling tradition, given its earlier connection to the *gter-ma* of Rin-chen Phun-tshogs. As we shall soon see, this important 'Bri-gung-pa figure (together with his student Karma-guru) had played an important role in the distribution of the teachings of both Karma-gling pa and his father Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas.

[80]There is reason to believe, however, that the *Padma zhi-khro* also contained its own *Bar-do thos-grol*. In the openings lines of the *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa*, we find the expression, *padma zhi khro'i bar do thos grol las*. It is unclear whether this *Bar-do thos-grol* was the same as that found in the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. If the two were related, then the *Bar-do thos-grol* would probably have represented a mixture of materials from both cycles. In time, the *Bar-do thos-grol* of the *Padma zhi-khro* must have been eclipsed by the apparently more popular version in the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. It is clear that the historical relationships between these texts will remain a mystery for quite some time.

sweet. Although there are a number of different versions of the narrative, all of them end in tragedy. Unlike the usual Tibetan hagiography, the life of Karma-gling-pa is far from perfect. The circumstances in which he found himself were dark and sinister, full of paranoia, misfortune, and betrayal. The inauspicious events of his life are encapsulated in three short episodes. We begin with the tale of mistaken auspices.

Generally it is held that the successful discovery of a hidden treasure requires the fulfillment of the completion phase (*rdzogs-rim*) of tantric practice, in which special meditative techniques are employed that usually involve the manipulation of sexual energies (see discussion in Chapters 1 and 2). In these types of practices, the *gter-ston* is expected to engage in certain sexual activities with a female consort. His union with this consort is designed to generate and re-awaken in his mind the radiant-light of bliss-emptiness (*bde-stong-gi 'od-gsal*)—the medium in which Padmasambhava had originally concealed the *gter-ma* in the mind of the discoverer's past incarnation.[81] By generating this radiant bliss-emptiness the scripture-revealer recreates his previous state of mind when Padmasambhava had first initiated him into the teaching.[82] This process opens the door, so to speak, to Padmasambhava's secret hiding place and permits the discoverer to find the *gter-ma* hidden there. The successful fulfillment of this practice, however, is not as straightforward as this description would lead us to believe. The treasure-revealer cannot get involved with just any female acquaintance; she must be *the* right woman, that is, the specific woman chosen by Padmasambhava, or by his consort Ye-shes-mtsho-rgyal, to be the exclusive partner of the appointed discoverer. If for some reason the proper consort cannot be found, or cannot provide the necessary support, the discovery might become complicated or altogether impossible, or even worse, the life of the *gter-*

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[81] Thondup 1986, p. 82; Gyatso 1998, p. 256.
[82] Gyatso 1998, p. 256.

ston himself may be threatened.[83] Such was the unfortunate circumstance for Karma-gling-pa.

By one account Karma-gling-pa's female partner, who had been indicated in the *gter-ma* prophecy, was supposed to be a beautiful young Brahmin's daughter with a glorious birth-mark. She was to serve as his spiritual consort (*phyag-rgya, mudrā*).[84] For reasons not made clear, however, the auspicious connection linking these two together had been fouled up (*'phyugs-pa*).[85] As a result, Karma-gling-pa was forced to choose another woman, who it so happens bore him a son. The relationship is said to have aroused gossip and malicious rumor, presumably among the villagers in and around Dwags-po.[86] Perhaps the clamor had more to do with a spurned family connection than it did to Karma-gling-pa's inability to unite with the right woman.[87] Whatever the real story, this whole affair sealed Karma-gling-pa's fate. His mistaken auspices and unfilled prophecy directly caused a disruption in his life, guaranteeing an untimely demise.[88] Oddly enough, it seems these misfortunes had little adverse effect on his ability to decode the *gter-ma* and later transmit its teachings.

In the life of a *gter-ston*, the climatic moment of discovery occurs precisely when the essence of the *gter-ma* itself appears or is revealed in some symbolically encoded form. The medium upon which this coded teaching is carried is usually called the "yellow paper" (*shog-ser*), or "paper scroll" (*shog-dril*). As Gyatso has argued, this scroll "is the manuscript, written by Padmasambhava or a disciple, that is physically buried; it is the

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[83]Thondup 1986, p. 83.
[84]GKCB, p. 458.
[85]LGNB, fol. 40; TMLG, fol. 65a; NBDS, fol. 229; RCBP, fol. 537; GJGT, fol. 589.
[86]LGNB, fol. 40; TMLG, fol. 65a; NBDS, fol. 229.
[87]Stan Mumford provides interesting ethnographic detail about gossip and untimely death. In his particular case study in Nepal, he writes about the importance of the timeliness of death and the consequences of an unlucky one. Untimely death instigates malicious talk (*mi-kha*), which is believed to harm the deceased's family and to force the soul (*bla*) to wander. See Mumford 1989, p. 199.
[88]GKCB, p. 458.

treasure substance itself. It is also one of the few material traces whose existence is sometimes cited as actual evidence of a treasure discovery".[89] According to tradition, when Padmasambhava's teachings were copied down on this yellow paper prior to their being concealed, they were first encrypted in a special Ḍākiṇī script. This script could be deciphered only by the individual prophecied as the *gter-ma's* revealer. In this way it was insured that the teachings would be safely preserved over time and that their secrets would not fall into the wrong hands. Although the texts do not seem to warn explicitly against the appointed discoverer showing this yellow scroll to others, we can assume that at least in the case of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma* it is certain that such actions were believed to garner severe consequences.

The mistaken auspices between Karma-gling-pa and his appointed consort was not the only cause of his shortened life. We are told also that he suffered because he showed one of his yellow pages to someone before the appropriate time.[90] In only one source is a reason given for this odd turn of events. In his *Bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rim-pa*, Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan explains that prior to death Karma-gling-pa asked one of his trustworthy students to watch over his young son, who was not yet mature enough to receive instruction.[91] To this student he entrusted the yellow scroll:

> "Take good care of my little boy until he grows up enough to think for himself. Then later deliver [this yellow paper] to him and [tell him] that he should entrust it to his own student, the one named Nyi-zla, the third generation [successor of my lineage]".[92]

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[89]Gyatso 1986, p. 17.
[90]LGNB, fol. 40; OGTL, fol. 25; TMLG, fol. 65a; NBDS, fol. 229.
[91]OGTL, fol. 25.
[92]OGTL, fol. 25: *shog ser bu dang bcas pa slob ma dam tshig can gcig la bcol ba dang : khyod kyi nga'i bu chung bsam pa ma tshar gyis bar du nyar ra legs por gyis : dus phyis kho rang la gtod dang kho la slob ma brgyud pa gsum pa nyi zla'i ming can 'ong ba la gtad dgos pa yin gsungs.*

Nowhere does Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan suggest explicitly that this event justified Karma-gling-pa's showing prematurely the yellow scroll to someone else, but it seems plausible that the author may have provided this sensible detail in response to his own teacher's (Rgya-ra-ba) failure to give a proper explanation of the circumstances involved. Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan is also the only historian of the tradition who describes Nyi-zla-chos-rje as still a child when his father is dying. Most of the other sources are silent on this point, and yet they all unanimously claim that Nyi-zla-chos-rje received the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* directly from Karma-gling-pa. The discrepancies are worth noting, for they help to pinpoint the elements that demand further investigation, the cracks in the seemingly uncomplicated narratives. These fissures often indicate where the story really lies.

The historical records claim that Karma-gling-pa was keenly aware of his impending death caused both by his failure to connect with the proper consort and by his imprudent display of the secret yellow document. In what may have been some trance-like state, he is said to have given numerous prophecies and made several clairvoyant statements about his own spiritual prowess, boasting that after his death many auspicious designs and marks would appear miraculously on his own corpse.[93] Such signs would be proof that he was a truly advanced and enlightened being. In the accounts by Rgya-ra-ba and Guru Bkra-shis, we also learn that a year or so later, on the verge of dying, he gave his son the initiations and "readings" (*lung*) of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and, as in the statement quoted above, told him to keep it secret until he met a holy man named Nyi-zla upon whom he was to bestow the *gter-ma*.[94] Shortly thereafter, Karma-gling-pa died. But the story is not yet finished. There is in fact a third version of Karma-gling-pa's death

[93]LGNB, fol. 41; TMLG, fol. 65a; NBDS, fol. 229; GKCB, p. 458.
[94]LGNB, fol. 41; GKCB, p. 458.

that is much less pristine and one that should alert us to the possible cover-up of some private scandal.

The reader may recall that in one of Padmasambhava's prophecies, he warned of a sudden danger caused by someone from within Karma-gling-pa's own circle of associates: "Beware of the violator of the samaya vows, the defilement of the black one!"[95] Indeed, in fulfillment of the prophecy this seditious and traitorous demon did appear, but he was not alone. The bizarre tale of murder at the hands of a close attendant (*nye-gnas*) and mistress (*jo-mo*) first appears in the seventeenth century, in the anonymous *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*. All subsequent re-tellings of this story seem to have been inspired by this leading work, which itself may have been based on an earlier account no longer extant.[96] Curiously, the story is nowhere to be found in Rgya-ra-ba's *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, the earliest known history of the Kar-gling transmision. In the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* account, Karma-gling-pa's student and mistress run away together and plot to murder their teacher. Pretending to have an important question to ask, they approach the *gter-ston*, prostrate respectfully before him, and make the requisite offerings. After the two leave, Karma-gling-pa suddenly becomes very sick and we quickly learn that the offerings of food had been tainted with poison. Here the story connects on certain points with the previous legend, for it is related that on the verge of dying Karma-gling-pa transmits the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* to his son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje.[97] In other versions, Karma-gling-pa transmits his *gter-ma* before he is poisoned—one case states that he offered only his father, Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, the complete precepts (*gdam-ngags*),[98] while another relates that he appointed both his father and son as sole "masters

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[95]LTKG, fol. 528.3.
[96]See GTCB, fol. 183; GKCB, p. 458; NBDS, fol. 229; BDTT, p. 523.
[97]TMLG, fol. 65b; NBDS, fol. 229.
[98]TMLG, fol. 65b.

of the teaching" (*chos-bdag*) before his life was threatened.[99] The whole matter becomes even more complicated when we acknowledge Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-rgyal's odd interpretation that the traitorous attendant was actually Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje![100] If this had been true then a number of puzzling questions would need to be answered. For instance, why would Karma-gling-pa's own son run off with his mother (or step-mother)? Aware that he had been poisoned why would Karma-gling-pa still insist on transmitting his religious treasures to a known murderer? Clearly, the problem must lie with Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-rgyal's confused understanding of the story he had been told, which led to the mistaken conflation of the attendant and Nyi-zla-chos-rje.[101] The two are completely separate individuals.

At any rate, on the verge of dying Karma-gling-pa is said to have offered a final testament to his father:

> "No ordinary medicine in the world can cure this illness of mine, so in order to perform the [yoga of] entering a corpse (*grong-'jug*) I must fetch the death-curing elixir from the northern slope of Mount Meru. After doing so, I will return in three days. During that time, father, I ask that you bind and protect my corpse."[102]

We can assume that shortly after this testament Karma-gling-pa expired, but not before he was able to transfer his consciousness into the body of a dead bird. The story continues. On the morning of the third day, against his father's protests, the nefarious couple began

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[99]TMLG, fol. 65a; GTCB, fol. 183; NBDS, fol. 229; BDTT, p. 523.
[100]GTCB, fol. 182; repeated in BDTT, p. 523 and referred to in GKCB, p. 458.
[101]The error is repeated in Gu-ru Bkra-shis, and later in Mkhas-btsun-bzang-po's *Biographical Dictionary* (BDTT), but of course both of them were simply quoting Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-rgyal's text.
[102]TMLG, fol. 65b: *bdag gi nad 'di gso ba la 'jig rten gyi sman phal gyis mi gsos pas / grong 'jug byas ba'i phyir bdag gis ri rab kyi byang phyogs nas / shi gsos kyi sman blangs nas zhag gsum la sleb ste 'ongs / de bar yab kyis spur la bsrung bsdom gyis shig gsungs nas grongs ngo*. Cf. also GTCB, fol. 183; GKCB, p. 458; NBDS, fol. 229; BDTT, p. 523.

cremating Karma-gling-pa's corpse. Suddenly a beautiful multi-colored bird appeared above them in the sky, carrying in its beak a purple fruit of a magical tree from the slopes of Meru. The awesome bird swooped down and landed on the mouth of the burning corpse. Just when this bird—possessed by the mind of Karma-gling-pa—began to concentrate on dissolving its consciousness into the dead body, the evil student attacked and beat the bird away with a stick. Tragically, the magical fruit was lost in the fire, Karma-gling-pa's efforts to revive his body through transference yoga were thwarted, and the only chance to save his own life was brutally taken away from him by his corrupt disciple. In the end, Karma-gling-pa was forced to depart to a buddha's pure land. From that point on we learn nothing more about either the attendant or the mistress, other than the fact that the lineage transmitted through this student never flourished in Tibet because it had been irreparably defiled by the stain of broken vows.[103]

From this last remark it seems plausible that Karma-gling-pa's disciple did in fact receive some part of the *Zhi-khro* teaching. His betrayal may have been socially and economically motivated. His act of poisoning was not fortuitous. Michael Aris has argued that in Tibet "there was and still is a widespread belief" in the magical efficacy of poison. If a person "succeed[s] in poisoning someone rich and successful, it is held that the fortune and glory of the victim is magically transferred to the poisoner".[104] Once he had received the proper initiations from Karma-gling-pa, the student may have thought he could then take everything by stealing his teacher's *g.yang* or "good fortune", his life-force (*srog*), and even his own mistress. Interestingly, the people of Dwags-po and Kong-po—the territory of Tibet where these tragic events had taken place and where the first lineage-holders are said to have been active—have had a long reputation for their

[103]GKCB, p. 458. Charles Ramble informs us that among certain tribes along the Tibetan-Nepalese border it was commonly held that a poisoner's lineage dies out within one or two generations. See Ramble 1997, p. 157.
[104]Aris 1988, p. 69.

penchant for poisoning religious figures and innocent travelers. This region has even been called the "Land of the Very Harmful".[105] Echoing Aris' statement above, Chan writes that the poisoners in this area "believe the essence and vitality of the poisoned person will transfer to them".[106] Consequently, the region has developed a sinister reputation and its people suffer from stereotypes that portray them as witches and horned demons.[107] Indeed, it seems quite appropriate that this was the territory that spawned a young visionary who was later poisoned after recovering a buried set of ancient and arcane "books of the dead".

After Karma-gling-pa's death, we learn that both Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas and Nyi-zla-chos-rje divided up his possessions, including a number of manuscripts from the *Bar-do thos-grol*. We must assume that Karma-gling-pa had been working on a set of bardo texts just before his death.[108] Although we cannot be sure, perhaps Karma-gling-pa's father and son found these old manuscripts and rewrote or elaborated them. It should be emphasized that the Kar-gling texts appear to have been controlled by their original author for only a brief while. In a very short time after Karma-gling-pa had recovered these texts it would appear that they were being reordered and revised by others close to him. The suggestion here is that both Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas and Nyi-zla-chos-rje helped to create the *Bar-do thos-grol* and were actually the ones responsible for transmitting some of Karma-gling-pa's most distinctive work. For example, the elusive *Dbang-bzhi 'phrad-tshad rang-grol* [*The Four Initiations: Self-Liberation of Whatever is Encountered*] is said to have been transmitted directly from Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas to his grandson Nyi-zla-chos-rje,

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[105]Chan 1994, p. 653. Note also Karmay's interesting discussion of these three regions in relation to the early myths of Gnya'-khri-bstan-po and the death of Gri-gum-bstan-po. Karmay 1998, pp. 211-227.
[106]Chan 1994, p. 653.
[107]Chan 1994, p. 653; Karmay 1998, p. 216-217; Ramble 1997, pp. 144-146 and 156-158.
[108]I presume that these would have included the *Bar-do'i smon-lam rnam-gsum*, the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*, and a variety of teachings on the bardos that would later be more formally arranged as distinct texts, such as the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*, *Srid-pa'i bar-do ngo-sprod*, and *Bar-do drug-gi khrid-yig*. See the concluding discussion in Chapter 2.

by-passing Karma-gling-pa altogether.[109] The exchange between grandfather and grandson is also indicated in the lineages listed in several prominent *gsan-yig*, as well as in a few transmission lists reproduced in some of the printed editions of the ***Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo***.[110] This mysterious and seemingly unorthodox lineage leads from Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas to Nyi-zla-chos-rje, and from him through the obscure lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po. Generations later, we find listed in the transmission the name of a controversial *gter-ston* from Khams, Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. This famous student of Rdzogs-chen Pad-ma-rig-'dzin (1625-1697) was expressly linked to the Kar-gling *Zhi-*

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[109]TMLG, fol. 66b. 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul writes that a certain Dngos-grub-rgya-mtsho (identified as Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas in the *TMLG*) had been the first to receive this transmission. See B3, fol. 63. Generally speaking, the four initiations (*dbang-bzhi*) of the *anuttarayoga-tantra* consist of the common vase initiation (*thun-mong-pa bum-dbang*) and the three higher initiations (*thun-min mchog-dbang gong-ma gsum*)—(i) the secret initiation (*gsang-dbang*), (ii) the initiation of discriminating pristine wisdom (*shes-rab ye-shes-kyi dbang*), and (iii) the initiation of word and meaning (*tshig-don-gyi dbang*). For details consult the lengthy discussion in Snellgrove 1987, pp. 213-277. Specifically in the Kar-gling tradition—as presented by the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer—the four initiations are listed as (1) the vase initiation (*bum-dbang*), (2) the secret initiation (*gsang-dbang*), (3) the pristine initiation (*ye-shes-dbang*), and (4) the indivisible innate initiation (*dbyer-med lhan-skyes dbang*). See, for example, *Gsangs-sngags rdo-rje theg-pa'i chos-spyod thun-bzhi'i rnal-'byor sems-nyid rang-grol*, T8, vol. 1, fols. 18.4-19.4. It is these four initiations that I would presume are referred to in the title above.

For what it is worth, there also exist four special initiations in the Snying-thig tradition (*snying-thig-gi dbang-bzhi*). Remember that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* is closely connected to this system. They are: (1) the external initiation of conceptual elaboration (*phyi spros-bcas-kyi dbang*), (2) the internal initiation free from conceptual elaboration (*nang spros-bral-gi dbang*), (3) the extremely secret initiation that is free from elaboration (*gsang-ba shin-tu spros-bral-gi dbang*), and (4) the most secret initiation that is free from elaboration (*gsang-chen rab-tu spros-bral-gi dbang*). Gyurme Dorje and Matthew Kapstein summarize these initiations as follows (see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, vol. 2, p. 129): "Briefly, the first employs a multiplicity of ritual objects and ideas, the second is free from both ritual objects and ideas, the third is beyond conception and description, while the fourth is the empowerment into the nature of the body of reality".

The precise manner in which the four initiations relate to the bardo practices is a topic that requires a more thorough treatment. It must suffice to comment here that these initiations are founded upon a distinctively Rdzogs-chen soteriology, which is aimed at the recovery of a primordial state of realization (*ye-shes*) through recognition of the intrinsic purity of reality (*chos-nyid*). As we noted in Chapter 1, freeing oneself (*rang-grol*) from the bondage of conditioned existence can be achieved in this life in dependence upon the techniques of "breakthrough" (*khregs-chod*) and "direct transcendence" (*thod-rgal*), or naturally during the experiences of dying and postmortem transition. The four initiations provide a preliminary introduction to the realization of these methods.

[110]See DLSY, vol. 4, fols. 90-91; RCKC, fols. 69-70; B1, fols. 1-6; B2, fols. 15-16; B4; CH; DH; T3. The fifth Dalai Lama explains (fol. 90.6-91.1): *deng sang brgyud yig phal cher la gter ston gyis sras la gnang ba 'dra zhig 'dug kyang / gter ston sku tshe thung bas gnang long ma [91] byung / yab kyis dgung lo brgya lo brgya nyi shu gzhugs pas des gnang ba yin / gter ston dam sel gyis gshegs zer ba'i sil can de nas brgyud pa ni min no* ("Nowadays almost all of the transmission lists say that Karma-gling-pa gave the teachings to his son. However, since Karma-gling-pa didn't live very long he didn't have time to give it to him directly. His father [on the other hand] lived for one hundred and twenty years, so he was the one who gave it [to Karma-gling-pa's son]. There are some who argue that Karma-gling-pa died [early] because of a stain of broken vows and that there is no lineage of transmission from him.")

khro, and appears particularly to have had an enduring influence on the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmission. We will have more to say about this colorful figure and the Kar-gling lineage associated with him in Chapter 5.

Other than father and son, the only mention of Karma-gling-pa's actual family is a curious statement that appears first in the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* and is then repeated by Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-rgyal. Here, it is said that Karma-gling-pa's lineage of disciples (*slob-brgyud*) flourished throughout Dbus, Gtsang, and Khams, but that his family descendants, his "bone lineage" (*gdung-rgyud*), though they may still reside in Tibet, had failed to produce any great benefits.[111] The implication here is that Karma-gling-pa's ancestry had not spawned any significant religious personages, or in a more unlikely scenario, that his family never generated any *materially* significant benefit, such as that gained in large donations to influential monasteries or in the patronage of charismatic religious figures. One has to wonder what tone is intended by this comment. Is this a criticism or just simply a social point of fact? At any rate, the short and tragic tale of Karma-gling-pa has come to a close. We now turn our attention to the history of the early transmission of his scriptural treasures.

4. THE "SUN-MOON" DISCIPLES

A confusion seems to have existed regarding the identity of Karma-gling-pa's most immediate disciple. As noted previously, several of the histories claim that Karma-gling-pa appointed his father, Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, and his son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje, as the sole "doctrine-masters" (*chos-bdag*). After the *gter-ston* himself, the doctrine-master (also "treasure-master") is the most significant individual in the lineage, for it is he who

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[111]TMLG, fol. 66b; GTCB, fol. 185.

preserves the tradition and insures that it is properly transmitted in the future.[112] According to Tulku Thondup, there are two types of doctrine-holder depending on how the "mind-mandate transmission" (*gtad-rgya*)—the actual entrustment of the teaching—had been received from Padamsambhava. The primary doctrine-holder is the one who, together with the *gter-ston*, had originally received the mandate in person, whereas the minor one had not.[113] The sources do not make it clear where Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas or Nyi-zla-chos-rje fit in this scheme. Some would argue for the primacy of the father since he is believed to have assisted Karma-gling-pa in uncovering the Sgam-po-gdar *gter-ma* and to have later received from him the complete oral precepts.[114] Others might claim Nyi-zla-chos-rje as chief doctrine-holder for it is through him that the main lineage, by most accounts, is said to have passed. In any event, it is certain that both Karma-gling-pa's father and son were his first significant disciples and the most effective early transmitters of the Kar-gling revelations. Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, we have seen, was a successful *gter-ma*-hunter himself who discovered, among other religious objects, a potent set of teachings concerned with the yoga of transference at the moment of death (*'pho-ba*). His life is shrouded in mystery. We know just as little about his grandson, Nyi-zla-chos-rje.

Nyi-zla-chos-rje, also referred to as Nam-mkha'-sangs-rgyas in the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*,[115] may have been Karma-gling-pa's only son. In keeping with hagiographic convention, he is said to have been a religious prodigy, capable of high intellectual achievement and gifted insight. He was a well-loved, compassionate teacher. Early on he

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[112] Thondup 1986, p. 226n.102.
[113] Thondup 1986, pp. 162-163.
[114] This argument, I believe, reflects the fifth Dalai Lama's point of view. See note 108 above.
[115] TMLG, fol. 65a.

had become expert in all five special sciences[116] and had especially mastered the essential teachings of Rdzogs-chen.[117] By the time he was seventeen[118] he had begun giving religious instruction and was skilled in bestowing initiations. He had become an able teacher and ritual specialist, and served as an inspiration to all his students. For reasons that are not made clear Nyi-zla-chos-rje left his hometown of Dwags-po and traveled east to Long-po,[119] where he first encountered a lama by the name of Nyi-zla-'od-zer (referred to also by the Sanskrit equivalent Sūryacandraraśmi, b.1409/21). This lama had earlier appeared to him in his dreams, signaling that the connections linking them together were auspicious and in proper alignment.[120] Nyi-zla-chos-rje immediately recognized Nyi-zla-'od-zer as the third appointed disciple forecast in the prophecy of Padmasambhava.[121] He thus presented Nyi-zla-'od-zer with the complete cycle of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*:

> "You have been prophecied as the third lineage-holder [of my father's *gter-ma*]. I've never given this teaching [to anyone else], not even to the wind. [In the prophecy] it is declared: *For up to three generations it is crucial that [this gter-ma] be transmitted to only one individual [at a time]. After the third generation there will arise immeasurable benefits for all living beings.*

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[116]In other words, he was fully educated. The five sciences included (1) spiritual philosophy (*nang-gi rig-pa*); (2) dialectics and logic (*gtan-tshigs-kyi rig-pa*); (3) grammar (*sgra'i rig-pa*); (4) medicine (*gso-ba'i rig-pa*); (5) arts and crafts (*bzo-gnas-kyi rig-pa*).

[117]LGNB, fol. 41; TMLG, fol. 65b; GKCB, p. 459.

[118]LGNB, fol. 41 reads "ten" rather than "seventeen".

[119]Several sources give the name Long-po Rtsi-dkar. According to Gyurme Dorje, Long-po was the site of numerous *gter-ma* discoveries attributed to the Rnying-ma visionary Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa (1340-1396), who kept close ties with the Karma Bka'-brgyud tradition. See Dorje 1996, p. 294.

[120]LGNB, fol. 42; TMLG, fol. 65b; GKCB, p. 459.

[121]The author of the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* only briefly mentions the name of Nyi-zla-'od-zer, but discusses at great length another "third-generation disciple", an obscure lama from Kong-po named Mgon-po-rdo-rje. If we follow this account, Nyi-zla-chos-rje may have first traveled to Long-po to present the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* to Nyi-zla-'od-zer, but then later went on to Kong-po to give Mgon-po-rdo-rje the authorized transmission of the *Dbang-bzhi 'phrad-tshad rang-grol*. See TMLG, fols. 66a-66b and discussion below.

> Do not show [these instructions to anyone] for at least six years. Put them into practice. Then, after six years, give them to another. Great benefit will come for all living beings. [Again, the prophecy states] ***Karma-gling-pa's beneficial [gter-ma] will spread to the north.*** This statement forecasts that the teaching will be disseminated and flourish in the northern districts."[122]

We read elsewhere that Nyi-zla-chos-rje also made an injunction regarding another cycle of teachings from Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma*:

> "Do not teach for at least ten years the cycle of the *'Og-sgo bde-chen*, which is included within this profound *gter-ma*. After that time, this teaching will be free from obstacles."[123]

With this brief description of the first extra-familial transmission of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma*, we not only move geographically along the Brahmaputra northeast to the region of Long-po and lower Kong-po, but we also move into a more clearly articulated historical space. Here the mythic overlays familiar to us in the legends of Karma-gling-pa, his father, and his son, fade slightly into the more historically concrete, albeit romantic, accounts of the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer and his student from Kong-po, Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. Unlike their predecessors, both figures can be dated with some certainty; their clans and family lineages identified. Moreover, both can be located

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[122]LGNB, fol. 42: *khyed lung bstan nas zin / brgyud pa gsum pa yin / ngas chos 'di rlung gi phyogs tsam yang su la bstan pa med / brgyud pa gsum gyi bar du gcig brgyud gces / brgyud pa gsum nas 'gro don rgya chen 'byung gsungs pa yod khyed kyang lo drug gi bar du su la'ang ma bstan / khyed rang nyams su longs / lo drug song nas gzhan la ston pa dang 'gro don rgya chen 'ong / karma gling pa'i 'gro don byang phyogs rgyas / zhes gsungs pas / byang phyogs su bstan pa dar rgyas su 'ong ba'i lung bstan yod.* Cf. also TBZB, fol. 6; TMLG, fol. 65b; GKCB, p. 459; NBDS, fol. 231.

[123]LGNB, fol. 42: *zab chos 'di'i 'og sgo bde chen kyi skor ni / lo bcu'i bar du su la ma bstan / de nas ston dang bar chad las grol ba yin gsungs.* Cf. also GKCB, p. 459. We have already noted that the *'Og-sgo bde-chen* is probably a general title referring to the two "path of means" (*thabs-lam*) texts which are extant in Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che's definitive arrangement of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* (T7)—one of these works is in fact attributed to Nyi-zla-'od-zer; this being the *'Og-sgo bde-chen 'dod-chags rang-grol-gyis nyams-khrid gud-du bkol-ba don-bsdus zab-khrid bde-ba rang-grol.* There is also an anonymously authored work which could have been penned by Nyi-zla-'od-zer—the *'Og-sgo bde-ba chen-po'i-khrid 'dod-chags rang-grol.* Both texts are found in T7, vol. 3, fols. 439-481 and 329-419, respectively

and tied to known Tibetan institutions. Nevetheless, the picture of their lives remains hazy and incomplete. In the section that follows, we will examine as closely as possible the life and contributions of these two lineage-holders. We begin with Rgya-ra-ba's teacher, the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer (Guru Sūryacandraraśmi).

The few details that we are given about Nyi-zla-'od-zer are sketchy at best. The earliest reference to him appears in Rgya-ra-ba's *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, which served as the main source for the later version in Guru Bkra-shis. The early sixteenth-century description by Rgya-ra-ba's student Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan is remarkably detailed, although quite brief. This latter account contains information that bears little resemblance to that found in the other two works, which suggests that at least one of these authors had mistakenly conflated Nyi-zla-'od-zer with some other Tibetan lama. Given that Rgya-ra-ba was closest in time to Nyi-zla-'od-zer, his presentation is probably the more reliable. Nevertheless, in constructing the story of Nyi-zla-'od-zer I think it is fruitful to examine the various accounts together in order to decide what facts are the most probable in light of the evidence presented.

Nyi-zla-'od-zer was born in Long-po Rtsi-dkar in the female-ox year 1409 or 1421 into the lineage descending from Rlang-chen Dpal-gyi-seng-ge.[124] He is said to have been the incarnation of an obscure Indian revealer of medical *gter-ma* named Vajramati (mid-13th-early 14th century), although several of the sources are not so clear on this point.[125] His father was a doctor named Yang-rgyal and his mother, G.yung-drung-

[124]LGNB, fol. 42-43; GKCB, p. 459. Rlang-chen Dpal-gyi-seng-ge was one of Padmasambhava's twenty-five chief disciples. Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan gives completely different information, claiming that Nyi-zla-'od-zer was born into the Sdong lineage within the family of Glod. The birthdate given above—female-ox (*mo-glang*)—is taken from this source. See OGTL, fol. 25.

[125]It is clearly stated in the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* that Nyi-zla-'od-zer was the reincarnation of Vajramati. See TMLG, fol. 66a. However, both Rgya-ra-ba and Guru Bkra-shis do not seem to agree. Instead, they claim that Nyi-zla-'od-zer was only prophecied in the work of Vajramati. See LGNB, fol. 43 and GKCB, p. 459. For what it is worth, after reviewing the relevant passages Khenpo Nyima Dondup concluded that the statements found in Rgya-ra-ba and Guru Bkra-shis should be interpreted as being in agreement with

rgyan.[126] He was the second oldest of four brothers and, as would be expected, was quickly recognized as a child prodigy. At the age of four he had already learned how to read and write. By the time he was six he had mastered the art of painting and sculpture. When he was eight he began composing religious treatises.[127] When he was still quite young, he ran off to practice meditation in solitude, and so gained an early reputation for being an extremely devout and advanced meditator. His numerous teachers, such as one Rje-btsun-grags-pa Rin-po-che,[128] helped him to become learned in scholastic exegesis, debate, and composition.[129] According to Guru Bkra-shis, Nyi-zla-'od-zer was the author of many volumes of philosophical writings collectively entitled *Bstan-bcos rgya-mtsho dgu-skor* [*Cycle of the Ninefold Ocean of Treatises*].[130] Unfortunately, it appears this literary cycle is no longer extant, although a number of Nyi-zla-'od-zer's other works are available in some of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* anthologies.[131] Although the various sources offer conflicting details about this nebulous figure, they all agree that it was he who bestowed the Kar-gling transmission upon Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.

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the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* (Interview, April 1998). For a brief biographical sketch of *gter-ston* Vajramati, see GKCB, p. 490; Bradburn 1995, p. 155.

[126]Again Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan gives a different name for the father, Lha-rje-phyag-rdor. Rgya-ra-ba and Guru Bkra-shis do not name his mother.

[127]OGTL, fol. 25.

[128]LGNB, fol. 43. Usually, this is the appelation used for the Sa-skya historian Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1146-1216), but here it may refer to the Phag-mo-gru leader, Gong-ma Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1374-1440), who was active in the Rong-yul region of Gtsang in western Tibet. During the latter's reign, Gtsang came under the power of the Rin-spungs princes. In 1485, the Rin-spungs forces attacked the Sa-skya-pa stronghold of Rgyal-rtse but were quickly defeated. Three years later, in 1488, they were eventually able to capture the Rgyal-rtse district, and in the following decades (between 1488 and 1517) controlled not only this area but also the central region of Lhasa. By 1565, however, the prominence of the Rin-spungs ruling family in these territories had been weakened considerably by the Bsam-'grub-rtse fiefdom at Gzhis-ka-rtse. See Shakabpa 1984, p. 88 and 90. On Gzhis-ka-rtse, see Dorje 1996, pp. 331-344; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 6 (J13).

[129]GKCB, p. 459.

[130]GKCB, p. 459.

[131]See Appendix 4.

5. RGYA-RA-BA AND THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE KAR-GLING LITURGY

In 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul's definitive biography of Tibet's most famous *gter-ston*—the *Rin-chen baiḍurgya'i phreng-ba'* [*Garland of Precious Lapis Lazuli*]—he emphasized that the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and attendant rituals were largely propagated by one Rgya-btsun[132] Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.[133] Kong-sprul's opinion seems to have been widely shared among the historians of Karma-gling-pa's tradition, for it is often stated that Rgya-ra-ba was the first to establish a lineage of transmission and that from him it spread throughout all of Tibet, including Dbus, Gtsang, Khams, Kong-po, Gnyal, Dwags-po, and so forth.[134] Furthermore, this pivotal figure was also the first to systematize the Kar-gling teachings, as well as to institutionalize its liturgy. His pioneering achievements resulted in the creation of a coherent and standardized set of ritual practices that could be easily distributed to other monastic institutions. Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma* was widely disseminate in this form, and Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho came to be seen as its premier architect. Most of the information we have about his life is found in his own history of the Kar-gling transmissions and in the short lineage biography by Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan (the details of which are also repeated in the religious history of Guru Bkra-shis).[135]

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[132]Abbreviation of *rgya-yi btsun-pa*, "venerable monk of the Rgya [clan]". On the meaning of such Tibetan titles, Gene Smith writes: "The respectful title *Lha btsun* (the abbreviation of *Lha yi btsun pa*) was applied only to ordained monks who were descendants of the old Royal Dynasty of Tibet. *Lha* is used for lineages claiming royal descent much in the same way that other lineages used the so-called "clan" name. *Lha btsun* is usually translated into Mongolian as *toyin*. Related titles are *rje btsun*, *zhabs drung* and *rje drung*. *Rje btsun* was and still is applied to personages descended from respectable lineages, particularly those of Ldong, Stong, Bse and Rmu, and who have taken religious vows. *Zhabs drung* was used for descendants of the ancient religious aristocratic lineages such as the Rgya of 'Brug, the Ga-zi of Byang Stag-lung and the 'Khon of Sa-skya. *Rje drung*, similarly, was reserved for monks or nuns descended from the secular aristocratic families." Smith 1969a, p. 25n.18.

[133]RCBP, fol. 538.

[134]LGNB, fol. 47; TMLG, fol. 66a; GKCB, p. 460; NBDS, fol. 231; RCBP, fol. 538; GJGT, fol. 589.

[135]Rgya-ra-ba is also mentioned briefly by name in the recently published abbatial record of Kaḥ-thog monastery by Mkhan-chen 'Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan (b.1929). See GLKT, p. 77; also pp. 83-84. For further details on his relationship to this institution, refer to the discussion in Chapter 4.

In the paragraphs that follow we turn our attention to the details of Rgya-ra-ba's life and conclude with a few remarks on his role as institutionalizer of the liturgical tradition associated with Karma-gling-pa. We should bear in mind throughout our discussion that Rgya-ra-ba's institutionalization of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was only a partial stage in the development of this tradition. To be sure, Rgya-ra-ba's efforts were instrumental in promoting the widespread circulation of this otherwise inconsequential *gter-ma*, but his transmission was not the only one that was handed down in Tibet. As we shall soon see, there was an another Kar-gling tradition that passed through an alternative lineage. I refer to the transmission of the *Dbang-bzhi 'phrad-tshad rang-grol* and the apparently related *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*.

Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho was born in the iron-male-dog year 1430 in lower Kong-po into the Rgya-ra-ba family belonging to the 'Gru (Gru) clan.[136] His father was named Nam-mkha' of Tshem-yul and his mother, Bde-ba-pad-ma. Following the untimely death of his parents when he was just five years old (1435), he was placed in the care of his paternal uncle, referred to simply as lama Chos-grub.[137] This lama held the family throne of Sman-mo (also known as Bkra-shis-sman-mo),[138] which judging from the paucity of references in the historical sources appears to have been quite small and relatively insignificant.[139] His earliest years appear to have been a time of unprecedented

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[136]Rgya-ra-ba is identified by 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul as the reincarnation of Lha-lcam Gang-'bum, who was perhaps the daughter of Khri-srong-lde'u-btsan. See B3, fol. 63.1. Rgya-ra-ba's descendants may have come from the district known as Gru-gu located near Sde-dge. Das mentions a village in this area named Gru-gu Rgya-ra (Das 1902, p. 246).

[137]Unless otherwise noted, the following account of Rgya-ra-ba's life relies primarily on LGNB, fols. 44-48; OGTL, fol. 26; and GKCB, pp. 459-460.

[138]Given as Sman-mo Bkra-shis-mgon in Rgya-ra-ba's *Dbyangs-snyan lha'i gaṇdhe*, a supplement to the *Brgya-phyag sdig-sgrib rang-grol*. See, for example, B1a, fol. 546.3.

[139]A place called Sman-mo is mentioned in the *Blue Annals* (p. 875) as the site where one Rgya-dar-seng-ge received teachings from Zhang Dga'-ldan-pa, a disciple of the Zhi-byed-pa Rma Chos-kyi-shes-rab (b. 1055). Unfortunately, the geographical location of this site is not given. The place-name of Sman-mo is also found in an inscription on the third floor of the Sku-'bum temple/stupa in Rgyal-rtse. Tucci 1989, part 2, pp. 60 and 201. It is unclear, however, whether these two references to Sman-mo refer to Lama Chos-grub's monastery.

learning, for he is said to have been able to read and write by the age of six. At twelve (1442) in the presence of Drung-chos Rdo-rje-rtogs-ldan (alias Drung Chos-ldan-pa)[140] he took layman's vows (Skt., *upāsaka*) and asked his uncle for teachings on the ***Mun-sel sgron-me*** [*Lamp that Dispels the Darkness*].[141] The precise identity of Drung Chos-ldan-pa is a question worth considering. For this purpose we must delve briefly into the history of two Rnying-ma-pa monasteries which have not received much attention in the secondary literature; namely, Dwags-po Rtse-le Gong-'og and its daugher house, Kong-po Thang-'brog 'Od-gsal-rtse.

The ancient monastery of Rtse-le Rnying-ma was established sometime in the fourteenth century by Kun-mkhyen Chos-sku-'od-zer.[142] He was a student of Se-sdeng-pa Sangs-rgyas-dpal and his nephew, Gu-ṇa-pha-la, both themselves disciples of Gnyan-ston Rdo-rje-ye-shes of the Sman-lung tradition.[143] Kun-mkhyen Chos-sku-'od-zer's main pupil was Rgya-ra Klong-chen-pa of Bar-khams in eastern Tibet, who scholars have mistakenly conflated with Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho (see discussion below). Over time, Rtse-le Rnying-ma fell into decay. During the first decades of the sixteenth century a monk named Rig-'dzin-chen-po Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal refurbished the institution and established a new monastery, Rtse-le Gsar-pa.[144] After him, two of Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal's sons came in succession to occupy the abbatial throne—these

[140]GKCB, p. 459.
[141]Text not identified.
[142]Full name given as Byang-mkhar-po G.yu-shul-ba Kun-mkhyen Chos-sku-'od-zer.
[143]GKCB, p. 727.
[144]When the old Rtse-le monastery had begun to fall apart it was transformed into an institution of married monks. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal—disciple of the eighth Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje (1507-1554) and the second Dpa-bo Gtsug-lag-phreng-ba (1503-1563)—instituted reforms and tried to reestablish the monastery as "pure" (*gtsang-dgon*), i.e., celibate. But since Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal had been recognized as an incarnation of Guru Chos-dbang, a married lama, he was obliged to follow the model of his predeecessor. Rtse-le Gsar-pa thus remained a monastery of married monks. See TSLG, fols. 316-320; cf. also Blondeau 1988, p. 157n.7

were Dpal O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin (d.1560) and Rje Karma-mthu-stobs-rnam-rgyal, respectively.[145]

In 1564 the overlord (*dpon-chen*) of Dwags-po, Bsam-'phel-don-grub, offered the ancient monastery of Thang-'brog 'Od-gsal-rtse to Mtshungs-med Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje (1533-1605), who was at that time an important monk (abbot?) at Rtse-le Gsar-pa.[146] In the following year he officially re-established the bipartisan institution of Thang-'brog as a "pure monastery" (*gtsang-dgon*) of unmarried monks.[147] From that point on Thang-'brog remained under the jurisdiction of the abbots of Rtse-le.[148] It would appear, however, that connections between Rtse-le and Thang-'brog were long-standing even before the sixteenth century, the age of Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje. An early link can be found in the person of Drung Chos-ldan-pa.

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[145] I plan to delve more deeply into the fascinating history of these institutions in a future study. For now, I hope it will suffice to provide here a few notes drawn from the important work of Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (see TSLG, particularly fols. 348-379; cf. also GKCB, pp. 745-749). The abbatial succession at Rtse-le and Thang-'brog monasteries is a complicated topic, but allow me to offer the following general details about their resident incarnate lamas.

The incarnation series of Dpal O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin: The first reincarnation of O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin, O-rgyan II Bkra-shis-phrin-las-rgya-mtsho (1565-1607), was invited to Thang-'brog monastery in 1569 at the age of five. In 1580, at the age of sixteen, he became throne-holder of that *grwa-tshang*. He died at the age of forty-three. The next incarnation was born in 1609 in Long-po Tsi-dkar as the son of Sde-pa Tshe-ring-dbang-po but died shortly thereafter in 1612. His reincarnation was born in 1614 also in Long-po. The fourth O-rgyan was invited to Thang-'brog in 1624 at the age of eleven. He studied under 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po (1585-1656) and at the age of sixteen (in 1629) took full ordination as a monk in the presence of Rje Nor-bu-bdran [abbrev.?]-pa, receiving the name O-rgyan IV Bkra-shis-dpal-bzang-po.

The incarnation series of Karma-mthu-stobs-rnam-rgyal: The first reincarnation of Karma-mthu-stobs was born in 1590 (*lcag-stag*, corrected from *me-stag*) as the son of one of Padma-dkar-po's (1527-1592) caretakers. In 1602 at the age of thirteen, he was invited to Thang-'brog *grwa-tshang* and took the vows of novitiate from both Mtshungs-med Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje and O-rgyan II Bkra-shis-phrin-las-rgya-mtsho. Later he received the full monastic vows from Dpa'-bo III Gtsug-lag-rgya-mtsho (1567-1633) and was given the name Karma-rig-'dzin Mchog-grub-rnam-rgyal (b.1590). At the age of seventeen (in c.1607), Karma-rig-'dzin Mchog-grub-rnam-rgyal was appointed abbot of Thang-'brog. He later became a teacher of Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol.

The incarnation series of Mtshung-med Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje: The first reincarnation of Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje was Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (Padma-legs-grub, 1608-1680), followed by Kun-bzang-padma-legs-grub (c.1681-1720), 'Jigs-med-bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan (c.1721-1768), Kun-bzang-bde-chen-rgya-tsho (c.1769-1807), and Kun-bzang-bde-chen (b.1808). The reincarnation of Sna-tshogs-rang-grol's nephew, Nor-bzang-pa, was Thang-'brog Dbon-sprul Padma-mchog-grub, who became a teacher of 'Jigs-med-gling-pa (1730-1798).

[146] TSLG, fol. 337.

[147] TSLG, fol. 339. This was in the wood-fire-sheep year 1565.

[148] After Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje's death, his reincarnation was discovered in the person of Padma-legs-grub, the famous Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1608-1680).

The older monastery of Thang-'brog had been originally established in the fourteenth century by an unnamed student of Chos-rje Bsam-gtan-dpal and the reincarnation of Pha-dam-pa Sang-rgyas.[149] The monastery was eventually destroyed by fire, and the task of restoring its community was taken up by one Drung-pa Blo-gros-seng-ge, the younger brother of a certain Chos-rje Gong-chen-pa Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. Blo-gros-seng-ge assumed the role of abbot and attracted many students of both the Rnying-ma and Gsar-ma (primarily Bka'-brgyud) traditions—an ecumenicalism for which Thang-'brog soon became famous.[150] After Blo-gros-seng-ge's death, his premier student Zhal-slob Rin-po-che Chos-ldan-pa became abbot and for a long while was renowned as Drung-pa Rdo-rje. Not long thereafter, when the monastery had begun to fall into decline, Drung Chos-ldan-pa moved to Rtse-le monastery in Dwags-po.[151] I believe it was this individual who in 1442 bestowed the *upāsaka* vows upon Rgya-ra-ba. It would seem clear then that Rgya-ra-ba must have been in contact with this abbot of Thang-'brog, and had received religious vows at either that institution or at Dwags-po Rtse-le. This detail is just one of many threads connecting Karma-gling-pa's successors to the monasteries of Rtse-le and Thang-'brog.

Our background story, however, is not complete. Before we continue, we must also mention a certain Mgon-po-rdo-rje, known from the lists of lineage-holders of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. There this figure is indicated as having received the transmissions directly from Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje. From the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* we learn that Nyi-zla-chos-rje traveled to Kong-po and while in retreat at some unspecified mountain hermitage met a lama named Mgon-po-rdo-rje. Nyi-zla-chos-rje determined through oneiromancy that this solitary holy man was meant to be the appointed disciple fit to

[149]TSLG, fol. 337.
[150]TSLG, fol. 338.
[151]TSLG, fol. 339.

receive the transmission that he had previously inherited from his grandfather, Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas.[152] Who was this Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po?

I am aware of only one figure from roughly this same time period with the name Mgon-po-rdo-rje,[153] although I hesitate to bring him up because the meagreness of the sources prevents any substantial solution. I can only offer a few fragments and an uncertain logic that pieces them together in the hope that my picture can be corrected in the future. He is perhaps more widely known as Chos-ldan-pa, the younger brother of Sman-lung-pa Śākya-'od (alias Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, b.1239) and abbot of an obscure monastery that bore his name.[154] If we accept the birthdate given for Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje, then Chos-ldan-pa appears to have lived much earlier than any of the persons that might interest us here, including Karma-gling-pa himself. However, he might still be worth noting for his close connection to the lineage of Sman-lung. Chos-ldan-pa's eldest brother, Sman-lung-pa, had a number of disciples from Dwags-po, and particularly one by the name of Dwags-ston Dbang-phyug-rdo-rje (alias Sangs-rgyas Gong-la-ba), whose later successors included the teachers of Kun-mkhyen Chos-sku-'od-zer.[155] This strong Rtse-le connection is intriguing, for as we shall see in the following chapters, certain key affiliates of Dwags-po Rtse-le Gong-'og and its sister branch of Thang-'brog 'Od-gsal-rtse in Kong-po became pivotal players in the diffusion of both the *Bar-do thos-grol*

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[152]TMLG, fol. 66a

[153]Of course, we could mention a certain Rdo-rje-mgon-po, but all we can say about this obscure figure is that he was born at a place called Sna-mo-lung and became a student of Rig-'dzin Rgod-ldem-can (1337-1408), from whom he received the complete authorization and instructions of the *gter-ma* of Zang-zang-lha-brag in Gtsang (see Ferrari 1958, pp. 65 and 153; Dargyay 1977, pp. 129-130; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 780-781 and map 4, J11). He lived for sixty-eight years (BDTT, vol. 3, p. 576). I can offer no evidence that either suggests or denies the possibility that this Rdo-rje-mgon-po received the Kar-gling transmission from Nyi-zla-chos-rje. All I have in this regard is a name.

[154]GKCB, pp. 296 and 667; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, p. 686. Guru Bkra-shis speculates that the monastery of Chos-ldan-pa must have been an active Rnying-ma-pa center since he had seen many fragments of the *Rgyud-'bum* preserved at its ruins.

[155]These being Se-sdeng-pa Sangs-rgyas-dpal and his nephew, Se-sdeng-pa Gu-ṇa-pha-la, both students of Gnyan-ston Rdo-rje-ye-shes. See GKCB, p. 727. Incidentally, the chief student of Chos-sku-'od-zer was Bar-khams-pa Rgya-ra Klong-chen-pa, who has been mistakenly conflated with Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. See Martin 1997, p. 58, no. 90; Cuevas, "Rgya-ra-ba".

chen-mo and the *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol*. So does this mean that Chos-ldan-pa, Mgon-po-rdo-rje, Kong-po Mgon-po-rdo-rje, and Drung Chos-ldan-pa may all be one in the same person? At this stage I hesitate to argue for a definitive yes, since the dates seem to conflict. However, the Mgon-po-rdo-rje that we are searching for may still have been tied in some way to the Sman-lung-pa line, which is expressly linked to the monasteries of Chos-ldan, Rtse-le Gong-'og, and the closely affiliated Kong-po Thang-'brog. In this light, we should draw attention to the fact that another of Nyi-zla-chos-rje's students—and the chief mentor of Rgya-ra-ba—namely Nyi-zla-'od-zer, was also associated with one of these institutions; that being the monastery of Thang-'brog. Let us return now to the life of Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.

In 1443 in the presence of Dam-pa Mnga'-ris-sa (also Dam-pa-yang Ngo-bo-ris-po), Rgya-ra-ba asked for the vows of novitiate (Skt., *śramaṇera*). Three years later, when he was only sixteen, he requested the cycle of Rdzogs-chen teachings from the great siddha Rnam-rgyal-bzang-po.[156] Two years later (1448) he received from one Nam-mkha'-bshes-gnyen the main teachings of the *Dus-'khor* (*Kālacakra-tantra*), the *Bla-ma dgongs-'dus* [*Embodiment of the Lama's Realization*],[157] and the *Kun-rig* (*Sarvavidyā*).[158] At twenty-one (1451), presumably following the death of his uncle, he became the throne-holder of Sman-mo Bkra-shis-dgon, taking charge of both the religious and secular affairs of that institution. Some time later, he went on pilgrimage to the sacred sites at both Tsa-ri and Lhasa. Apparently while in central Tibet he requested to

[156]This was the author of a treatise entitled *Dam-chos rdzogs-pa-chen-po ngo-sprod-kyi skor las kham-pa'i mi-mo la-brten-nas rnam-shes 'byung-'jug gnas-gsum ngo-sprod*—a text mentioned by name in the *gsan-yig* of both the fifth Dalai Lama and Gter-bdag-gling-pa under the heading of Kar-gling transmissions. See DLSY, vol. 4, fol. 89.5; TLSY, fol. 390.2; cf. also DJTY, fol. 179.4; ZDTY, fol. 511.3. The work is extant in T7, vol. 2, fols. 443-467.

[157]A *gter-ma* of Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa (1340-1396), who was born in the Nyang district of Kong-po. A brief account of his life is found in Bradburn 1995, pp. 180-182. Also see Smith 1972.

[158]A funeral practice (particularly favored by the Sa-skya order) associated with Vairocana from the Yoga-tantra cycle of the *Sarvadurgatipariśodhana* and akin to the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. See Tsepak Rigzin 1986, p. 8; cf. Skorupski 1983 and discussion in Chapter 1.

be fully ordained as a Buddhist monk in the presence of Chos-rje Gtsang-chen-pa. It was this lama who gave him the name Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.

Could this ordination lama have been Chos-rje Gtsang-pa of Khyung-tshang monastery, teacher of the *gter-ston* Mdo-sngags-gling-pa Mchog-ldan-mgon-po (1497-1521)? There is evidence that suggests a connection between Rgya-ra-ba and this *gter-ston* from Lho-brag. We read in the latter's autobiography that he, Mchog-ldan-mgon-po, received instructions on the so-called *Bar-do ngo-sprod* and *'Pho-ba 'debs-pa* from an elderly man named A-khu Rgya-btsun, who was dying of leprosy (*mdze*).[159] Beyond the obvious bardo connections, this should strike us immediately because in other contexts we know the title "Rgya-btsun" as a specific name for Rgya-ra-ba. Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho even refers to himself as Rgya-btsun at the end of his *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba*.[160] So we must ask if this elder teacher of Mchog-ldan-mgon-po was actually Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho? Note also that Mchog-ldan-mgon-po's father, Sum-dar-rgyal-po, belonged to the Rgya clan. Furthermore, in addition to sharing a close affiliation with the monastery of Dwags-po Rtse-le, both Rgya-ra-ba and Mchog-ldan-mgon-po had close contacts with a Chos-rje Gtsang-pa, from whom they both received the layman's vows.[161] Although there are several other loose connections that indicate some type of relationship,[162] we cannot make decisive conclusions at this point.

The precise location of Rgya-ra-ba's Sman-mo monastery is a question that merits sustained consideration if we are to begin to construct an account of his early history. The fifth Dalai Lama explicitly attests to the latter's close affiliation to this monastery when he

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[159]See CHGP, fols. 95.5-97.5. Mchog-ldan-mgon-po is discussed briefly in Ehrhard 1997c, pp. 338-341 and 349n.9.
[160]See LGNB, fol. 48b.
[161]See GKCB, p. 422 and 460.
[162]For example, the coincidental grouping of important Kar-gling lineage-holders, like Rtse-le Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal and Chag Byang-chub-gling-pa.

refers to him as ***sman-mo-ba rgya-btsun***, "the Venerable Rgya[-ra-ba] from Sman-mo".[163] The term Sman-mo-ba is also found in an inscription listing the patrons of a particular set of wall paintings in the Sku-'bum stupa in Rgyal-rtse (built in 1440), upon which appears the phrase "[those patrons], the brothers from Sman-mo in Rgyang-[m]khar" (***rgyang-'khar sman-mo-ba spun***).[164] If we consider this information in light of what we know from the biographies, we can place Rgya-ra-ba in Kong-po during his formative years, from 1430 to 1435, at which time after the death of his parents he moved to his uncle's monastery where he resided until he was twenty-one. Some time in the following years after ascending the monastic throne of Sman-mo, he traveled on pilgrimage to Lhasa where he appears to have received the name Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. From Lhasa he must have journeyed back to his birthplace of Kong-po, where as we shall soon see, he met his root lama, Nyi-zla-'od-zer.

Returning now to the account of Rgya-ra-ba's life described in his own biography, he relates that it was at the monastery of a certain Rkang-med-rgyal-mtshan (probably meaning Rgyal-mtshan from Rkang-smad, i.e., lower Kong-po)[165] that he first met lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer, who had been formerly invited by the head lamas and patrons to visit

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[163] DLSY, vol. 4, fol. 91.2-3.

[164] This inscription is located in the twelfth chapel on the third floor. In full it reads: ***zhing khams rnams kyi dgos kyi sbyin bdag kyang rgyang 'khar [mkhar] sman mo ba spun / bya phrug spun / gos pa zo ba / chos rgyal nye 'khor rnams kyis gus pas bgyis***. Tucci 1989, part 2, pp. 60 and 201. On Sku-'bum see Batchelor 1987, p. 285-293; Ricca & Lo Bue 1993. Tucci mistakenly locates Rgyang-mkhar in Lha-rtse in far western Tibet. See Tucci 1989, part 1, p. 36. A certain Rgyang-mkhar-rdzong is said to be located in the district of Mtsho-sna in southern Tibet (a region known also as Mon-yul). See ***Tshig-mdzod chen-mo***, p. 542. On the district of Mstho-sna, see Dorje 1996, pp. 263-264; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 8 (K17). No matter how compelling the suggestion may be, we cannot be certain that Rgyang-mkhar Sman-mo is identical with Sman-mo Bkra-shis in Rgya-ra-ba's biography, and so we may search instead for that institution in the vicinity of Kong-po since that was his birthplace. Bearing this in mind, I wish to suggest that a certain Sman-gling monastery in the region of lower Kong-po south of the Brahmaputra and northeast of Long-po may be located on or at least nearby the original foundation of the Sman-mo mentioned in the biographies. In this respect, the expression "Sman-gling" could be seen as an abbreviated form of "Sman-mo-gling". See Dorje 1996, pp. 293-298. For the location of Sman-gling (Menling) see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 8 (J19).

[165] LGNB, fol. 43. Frequently, the term "***rkang***" is an alternative form of "***kong***" when referring to the geographical region. However, in the ***Tshig-mdzod chen-mo*** (p.93), the expression ***rkang-med*** is said to be an archaic term for "serpent" (***sbrul***).

Rkang-med's son. The identity of both Rkang-med-rgyal-mtshan and his affiliated monastery is a mystery. Perhaps one clue may lie in the colophons of two of Nyi-zla-'od-zer's own works, where it is stated that the texts were authored at the behest of the lama Nam-mkha' at the monastery of Thang-'brog in Kong-yul.[166] Clearly, this is a reference to Rgya-ra-ba and to the site of the famous daughter house of Rtse-le monastery. Is it possible that Nyi-zla-'od-zer had been a resident of Thang-'brog monastery sometime in the middle years of the fifteenth century? Could Rkang-med-rgyal-mtshan and his son also have been at Thang-'brog, and if so what exactly would their positions have been? These questions are not easy to answer. As we have come to realize, the connections between Nyi-zla-'od-zer, Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, and the monastery of Kong-po Thang-'brog are curious indeed and require more thorough investigation. The riddles may not be resolved until we have a broader and more detailed picture of the history of the personalities involved. In this regard it would certainly help if the "great" biography of Nyi-zla-'od-zer mentioned in Rgya-ra-ba's *Nor-bu'i phreng-ba* could be located and consulted.[167]

After returning home from his pilgrimage, which as we have speculated may have included a visit to Thang-'brog monastery and a meeting with Nyi-zla-'od-zer, Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho invited the lama Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan to visit Sman-mo.[168] As is expected of traveling lamas in Tibet, Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtsan performed rituals and bestowed initiations on Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho and his monastic

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[166] T7, vol. 3, fols. 480-481; T7, vol. 2, fol. 265.

[167] LGNB, fol. 43: *rje btsun chen-po de'i rnam thar phu ti chen po gcig yod.*

[168] There are at least four known fifteenth century figures with the name Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, the first three of whom appear to have been Bka'-brgyud affiliates: (1) Spyan-snga Rin-po-che Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1378-1466), (2) Chos-rje Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang-po (1386-1434), (3) Chos-rje Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1408-1463), and (4) Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1466-1540). See Martin 1998, p. 66-67, no. 110; Roerich 1949, pp. 589-595 and 721; Bradburn 1995, p. 206. On the question of whether this lama was Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, I am inclined to say that the latter was probably too young to have been invited to Sman-mo as a reputed teacher. The Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan mentioned in this context must have been Rgya-ra-ba's elder, or at least his contemporary.

community. It is interesting to consider a possible link between Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan and the son of Rkang-smad-rgyal-mtshan, whose invitation of Nyi-zla-'od-zer was the occasion of Rgya-ra-ba's first meeting with his root teacher. The idea would be far-fetched if some connection between Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan and Nyi-zla-'od-zer could not at all be established, and indeed it does appear that no direct ties are readily apparent. However, in Rgya-ra-ba's own chronological account he discusses his meeting and subsequent relationship with Nyi-zla-'od-zer immediately following his brief mention of Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan's visit to Sman-mo. Could it be that Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho had earlier met both lamas at Rkang-smad-rgyal-mtshan's monastery? Could this have been the monastery of Thang-'brog in Kong-po, or the Rtse-le Gsar-pa monastery in Dwags-po instituted by Bsod-nam-rnam-rgyal (known also as Bsod-nams-gyal-mtshan)? Is it too far-fetched that Rkang-smad-rgyal-mtshan, Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, and Rtse-le Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal might all have been the same person? We noted that Rgya-ra-ba did indeed have some contact with Nyi-zla-'od-zer at Kong-po Thang-'brog monastery, and thus it seems likely that they would also have established relations with members of the Rtse-le monastery in nearby Dwags-po.

Before leaving this conundrum I want to say a few words about the mistaken identity of Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho made apparent in a note by Dan Martin in his recent *Tibetan Histories: A Bibliography of Tibetan-Language Historical Works.*[169] Here Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho is mentioned in the context of a controversial fourteenth century history entitled *Chos-'byung rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod thub-bstan gsal-bar byed-pa'i nyi-'od* [*Sunlight Illuminating the Sage's Teaching: An Anthology of Precious treasures on Religious History*]. According to Martin's notes, there are two separate authors associated with the title of this work, Klong-chen-rab-

[169]Martin 1997, p. 58, no. 90.

'byams-pa (1308-1363) and a certain Rgyal-sras Thugs-mchog-rtsal. Following Bsod-nams-don-grub, Martin proposes that the second author was actually Rgya-ra Klong-chen Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, a.k.a. Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, who he then mistakenly conflates with the Kaḥ-thog-pa lama, Kha-ba-dkar-po Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.[170] In all of this confusion of names, one fact emerges quite clearly. None of the authors named can be identified with Rgya-ra-ba. At this juncture I do not wish to argue even tentatively that Rgya-ra-ba could not have written this *Thub-bstan gsal-bar byed-pa'i nyi-'od*—that problem has yet to be explored. However, I will say that it is highly unlikely that either Rgyal-sras Thugs-mchog-rtsal or Rgya-ra Klong-chen could be the fifteenth century systematizer of Karma-gling-pa's textual tradition. First, Rgyal-sras Thugs-mchog-rtsal is not a name that is found in any of the available historical and biographical sources that document the transmission of Karma-gling-pa's scriptural revelations. We would expect that if this name referred to Rgya-ra-ba then we would see both names overlap in other contexts. I am surprised, for instance, that a historian as thorough as the fifth Dalai Lama would not have equated the two in his voluminous *gsan-yig*, assuming of course that he had information on the identity of this Thugs-mchog-rtsal, and indeed he does seem to have had some opinion on the matter.[171] As for the second author, Rgya-ra Klong-chen, although he may share the names of both Rgya-ra-ba and Klong-chen-pa, and is tied through his teacher to the institution of Dwags-po Rtse-le, he appears to have been neither one nor the other. A reference to Rgya-ra Klong-chen-pa is found in the *Chos-'byung* of Guru Bkra-shis, where we learn that he was the principal student of Rtse-le Kun-mkhyen Chos-sku-'od-zer. It would appear that this particular Rgya-ra, renowned as the second Klong-chen-pa, was best known for his religious

[170]On whom see GLKT, pp. 72-73.
[171]Karmay 1988, p. 33n.45; Martin 1997, p. 59.

polemics and not for liturgical redactions, especially those concerning the funeral teachings of Karma-gling-pa.[172]

At any rate, Rgya-ra-ba received an enormous amount of instruction from Nyi-zla-'od-zer, including countless numbers of initiations and "readings" of the *Gsang-sngags rgyud-'bum* [*One Hundred Thousand Tantras of Secret Mantra, =Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum*]. The fact that Nyi-zla-'od-zer was in possession of some version of this significant corpus of scripture in the middle of the fifteenth century deserves special comment, particularly in light of the textual evidence which places Nyi-zla-'od-zer at this time in Kong-po at Thang-'brog monastery. The collection of texts referred to as *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum* exists in several different versions, none of which are in exact agreement as to the number of texts included or the order of their arrangement. In essence, each of these editions reflect the individual diversity of a specific history of transmission. These local histories have only recently begun to be documented with some success by scholars in the field.[173] It is not our purpose to reproduce their work in this chapter, but we should point out one intriguing piece of evidence. Franz-Karl Ehrhard has uncovered valuable information regarding the "provisional editions" (*rags-rim*) of this collection which date as far back as the fourteenth century. Ehrhard refers us to the biography of Gter-bdag-gling-pa, where it is stated that for the preparation of Gter-bdag-gling-pa's own seventeenth-century edition of the *Rgyud-'bum* he relied on three earlier versions, the so-

[172]Dan Martin has pointed out to me that at folio 474 of Bsod-nams-don-grub's *Chos-'byung rin-po-che'i gter-mdzod bstan-pa gsal-bar byed-pa'i nyi-'od-kyi mdzad-pa-po su yin bstan-pa*, he mentions the name Rgya-ra Klong-chen-pa in reference to anti-Rnying-ma polemical works. The Tibetan reads: *gzhan rgya ra klong chen pa sogs snga phyi'i mkhas pas mdzad pa'i rtsod lan du ma yod do.* (e-mail communication of June 17, 1998). Guru Bkra-shis gives the title of one of Rgya-ra Klong-chen's polemical texts as *Dbu-ru dpal-'dzin-gyis rtsod-lan log-rtog kun-'joms rdo-rje pha-lam* (GKCB, p. 729). It seems, however, that this work may actually have been penned by Rgya-ra's successor, the third Klong-chen-pa (E. Gene Smith, e-mail communication of January 22, 1999). Of course, the third Klong-chen-pa is known also as Sha-gzugs-pa Ngag-dbang-bkra-shis-rnam-rgyal, alleged author of the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*. Admittedly, the matter is a bit confusing and deserves more serious investigation.

[173]I am referring here to the pioneering works of Franz Karl-Ehrhard, Dan Martin, David Germano, and Robert Mayer.

called "mother-prints" (*ma-dpe*) which had been gathered from 'Ug-pa[bya]-lung, Gtsang-rong, and Kong-po Thang-'brog.[174] Is it possible that the Thang-'brog edition referred to here was the very same one bestowed upon Rgya-ra-ba by his teacher, Nyi-zla-'od-zer?

In addition to the *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum*, Rgya-ra-ba received from Nyi-zla-'od-zer the entire cycle of initiations, oral transmissions, and instructions from Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, including the smaller text cycle of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. Nyi-zla-'od-zer admonished him to spread the *gter-ma* to anyone he thought was suitable to receive it. By following the lama's advice, in his own words, "the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* shone as bright as the sun" and "came to be of great benefit to all living beings".

Rgya-ra-ba's other teachers included such luminaries as the sixth Karma-pa, Mthong-ba-don-ldan (1416-1453), the *gter-ston* Ratna-gling-pa (1403-1478), Khrims-khang lo-tsā-ba (alias Bsod-nam-rgya-mtsho, 1424-1482), the 'Bri-gung-pa brothers Rin-chen-chos-rgyal (1446-1484) and Dbang-chos-kyi-rgyal-po (1448-1504), and the second 'Brug-chen Rgyal-dbang-chos-rje, Kun-dga'-dpal-'byor (1428-1476), abbot of Dwags-lha Sgam-po.[175] He is also said to have received teachings from Sa-skya-pa Dpal-ldan-bzang-po and one Khro-phu-lo-tsā-ba, who may have been in fact 'Gos-lo-tsā-ba Gzhon-nu-dpal (1392-1481) author of the famed *Deb-ther sngon-po* [*Blue Annals*].[176]

At some point during his mature years, Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho laid the foundations of as many as six or seven monasteries, including one by the name of Dpal

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[174]Ehrhard, unpublished manuscript. A *Rgyud-'bum* from Dar-gling (Dar-rgyas-chos-sding) is also mentioned in this passage. See TLNT, vol. 1, fol. 290.6.
[175]See Roerich 1949, p. 672; cf. also Martin 1998, p. 72, no. 126.
[176]I am grateful to Gene Smith for helping to identify some of these names with their associated dates (e-mail communication of April 14, 1998).

Chos-'khor-rtse, which has not been identified in the available geographies.[177] In his final years we are told he rested in solitary retreat at a mountain hermitage, where he mastered the various stages of tantric practice. On Sunday July 19, 1499[178] at the monastery of Mda'-rin-chen-gling, Rgya-ra-ba completed as his final testament (*kha-chems*) the *Brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, the first recorded history of the transmissions of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma*. He dedicated this work to the "young lions of future generations" and reassured them that by practicing the teachings of Karma-gling-pa "they may at the very least take comfort in the fact that they will not be anxious and distraught when the moment of death arrives", for his lama, Nyi-zla-'od-zer, insured him that "it was impossible for any sentient being to transmigrate to the lower realms if he listens many times to these teachings". Finally, in the colophon we read:

> "At the repeated urging of my spiritual friend, lama Chos-rgyal from Mdo-khams,[179] and for the sake of [increasing] the faith in those inferior-minded people like myself, I, Rgya-btsun Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, compiled this account of some of the stages in the transmission of this *gter-ma* doctrine in the earth-sheep year on the tenth day at the beginning of the seventh month at Dpal-rin-chen-gling, which is on the right side of the golden Lo-hi-ta river at the bottom of the snowy foothills to the right of Gtam-myong[-myog] Rgya-grong. The text was copied down by my scribe Bsod-nams-rgya-mtsho, the humble monk from Lho-rgyud. Having presented this history with virtue, I pray that all

[177]Gyurme Dorje mentions the ruins of two monasteries in Kong-po that shared the name Chos-'khor-gling. One of these institutions was a famous branch of the Dge-lugs-pa monastic system of Se-ra, the other was Rnying-ma-pa. It is plausible that this latter Chos-'khor-gling could have been Rgya-ra-ba's own Chos-'khor-rtse, but the issue is far from settled. See Dorje 1996, p. 301.

[178]Tibetan year: *sa-lug lo zla-ba bdun-pa'i yar-tshes-bcu*. The western date noted above is according the the Old Phugs-pa calendrical system which was in use roughly between 1447 and 1695. See Schuh 1973; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, p. 400.

[179]Could this have been one of the 'Bri-gung-pa brothers, Rin-chen-chos-rgyal (1446-1484) or Dbang-chos-kyi-rgyal-po (1448-1504)? Or, maybe perhaps Dgongs-'dus-pa Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, the holder of the special *Bar-do thos-grol* transmission that would later be identified with the Zur-mang tradition? See discussion in Chapter 4.

> sentient beings be quickly liberated from both samsara's and the lower realms' great oceans of suffering and obtain the expansive awakening of complete omniscience. Sarva-mangalaṃ![180]

The monastery of Mda'-rin-chen-gling is mentioned in the colophons of two other works composed by Rgya-ra-ba.[181] Although its location is described in detail, the relevant place names have yet to be properly identified.[182] The real key seems to lie in the names "Lo-hi-ta", "Gtam-myong[-myog]", and "Rgya-grong". Wylie reports that the Brahmaputra is traditionally called "Ro-hi-ta" in southeastern Tibet at the point where it runs into India.[183] The exact location referred to in Wylie's note, however, is not clearly indicated on the maps of the region. We should mention nevertheless a few possible localities. Lohit is the name of a river in the eastern district of Rdza-yul. This river, which is formed by the convergence of the Gangs-ri-dkar-po-chu from the west and the Zangs-chu from the east, flows south through lower Rdza-yul into Arunachal Pradesh (India) and continues on through eastern Assam.[184] Although there is a strong likelihood that this Lohit is the river mentioned by Rgya-ra-ba, the name Lohita might instead refer more generally to the southern course of the Brahmaputra. The point where the Brahmaputra

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[180]LGNB, fol. 48b: *de ltar brgyud pa'i rim pa zur tsam 'di / mdo khams kyi bshes gnyen dam pa bla ma chos rgyal gyis yang yang bskul nas / rang 'dra blo dman rnams yid ches pa'i phyir / sa lug lo zla ba bdun pa'i yar tshes bcu la / gdam myong rgya grong gi g.yas zur gangs phu'i 'dab / chu bo gser ldan lo hi ta'i g.yas phyogs / dpal rin chen gling du rgya btsun nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bkod pa / yi ge pa ni lho rgyud kyi ban chung bsod nams rgya mtsho bris pa'o / dge ba yis mtshon nas sems can thams cad 'khor ba dang ngan song gi sdug bsngal gyi rgya mtsho chen po la myur du grol nas / rnam mkhyen rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thob pa'i rgyu ru smon / sarvamangala.*

[181]See *Bka'-srung dam-can sde-bdun chos-skyong kun-'dus-kyi mdangs-bskang gdug-pa rang-grol*. In GK, fol. 71.6-72 and T7, vol. 1, fol. 232; and *Bskyed-rim sngon-'gro lhan-thabs*. In PY, fol. 59.2-3; T5; T6, fol. 60.2-3; and T8, vol 1, fol. 56.4-5.

[182]The *'Dzam-gling rgyas-bshad* makes reference to a monastery along the Brahmaputra called Rin-chen-gling, founded by Dpal-chos-kyi-grags-pa near the monastery of 'Ol-kha-byams-pa-gling in the southern district of Zangs-ri. See Wylie 1962, pp. 92 and 172n.530; cf. also Dorje 1996, pp. 282-284; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 8 (J17). This places us in the general vicinity of Dwags-po to the east, Lhasa to the far northwest, and Gnyal to the far south.

[183]"This is the Lohitya, a name applied to the Brahmaputra during part of its course in eastern Assam." Wylie 1962, p. 118n.38; cf. also Das 1902, p. 1222.

[184]Dorje 1996, pp. 443 and 479-480; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, maps 8 (K21) and 11 (K22). On Assam in relation to eastern Bhutan, see Aris 1979, pp. 111-114.

actually runs southward into India is located west of Rdza-yul in the hidden valley of Padma-bkod, but there is no indication that the river is called Lohita in this area.[185] However, since the "right side" (*g.yas-zur*) of a river is generally determined by someone facing downstream, the "right" of the Brahmaputra in the Padma-bkod valley would point us in the direction of lower Kong-po, the birthplace of Rgya-ra-ba. But then how in this instance would we interpret the phrase "Gtam-myong[-myog]"? Perhaps we have to search elsewhere for this elusive Lohita.

'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse claims that the Lohita flows from the southern region of Gnyal.[186] Presuming that the Lo-hi-ta does flow southward from Gnyal, the "right side" of this river would point us in the direction of Lho-brag in the lower Brahmaputra valley of southern Tibet.[187] The "Gtam" in the phrase "Gtam-myong[-myog]" might then be an abbreviation for "Gtam-shul" (modern-day Mtsho-smad).[188] The identity of "-myong[-myog]", however, still remains to be settled. It might simply be the proper name of a "large town" (*rgya-grong*) in the river valley of Gtam[-shul].[189] If our speculations on these obscure location names are correct, it would appear that Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho may have spent some time in the southern-most reaches of both central and eastern Tibet.

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[185]Dorje 1996, pp. 297 and 477; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 8 (J19-20).

[186]See *The Collected Works (Gsung-'bum) of the Great 'Jam-dbyangs-mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po*. Gonpo Tsheten (Gangtok 1977+), vol. 3, fols. 124-146, esp. fols. 129-130: (no. 9): *kā ma rū pa ni 'dod pa'i gzugs te / gnyal gyi lho thod na grong khyer chen po gcig yod / de'i phyogs na sgrub gnas rdo'i lingga chos 'byung mi gang tsam gyis mtho ba zhig yod /* [130] *phyogs de nas chu bo lo hi ta yang 'bab bo.* I am grateful to Dan Martin for this reference and for helping me think through some of the geographical obscurities presented here in Rgya-ra-ba's colophon (e-mail communication of October 22, 1998).

[187]Dorje 1996, pp. 273-278; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 6 (K15-16).

[188]Dorje 1996, pp. 270-272; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 6 (K16). Note also that Rgya-ra-ba's scribe, Bsod-nams-rgya-mtsho, hailed from Lho-rgyud, a general term for the south which might refer to Lho-kha in the Yar-lung valley, including Lho-brag. The *Tshig-mdzod chen-mo*, p. 3110, defines "*lho-rgyud*" as synonymous with the terms "*lho-ngos*" or "*lho-phyogs*", meaning simply "south" or "southern region". Here, the term "*lho*" might serve as a shortened form of Lho-kha. See *Dag-yig gsar-bsgrigs*, p. 867.

[189]In this light, we should point out that both the areas of Gnyal and Gtam-shul (Mtsho-smad) border the southern region of Mtsho-sna, which is the place where we thought the monastery of Sman-mo may have been located.

Although we seem to be able to locate Rgya-ra-ba in the vicinities of Rdza-yul, Kong-po, and southern Dbus, we still do not know much about where he was active in his mature years—from roughly 1451, when he ascended the throne of Sman-mo monastery, to 1499, when he composed his history of the Kar-gling transmissions. Moreover, apart from his ties to important members of the Kaḥ-thog monastery in eastern Tibet, Rgya-ra-ba's later activities are not specified in the available records. For further biographical details, therefore, we have to rely on the fragmented references scattered throughout various colophons at the end of works attributed to him.

In addition to the monastery of Mda'-rin-chen-gling, the names of two other monasteries (both of which we have discussed briefly above) are mentioned in the concluding statements of several of Rgya-ra-ba's works; namely, the monasteries of Sman-mo Bkra-shis-dgon and Dpal Chos-'khor-rtse. We noted that the former institution was previously administered by Rgya-ra-ba's paternal uncle, lama Chos-grub, and that it later became Rgya-ra-ba's seat in 1451, while the monastery of Dpal Chos-'khor-rtse was one of six or seven institutions founded by Rgya-ra-ba himself. Perhaps Mda'-rin-chen-gling was also one of these institutions. Based on the order of events related in his own biography, it seems that we may be able to utilize these three monasteries as chronological markers in tracing the progress of his literary achievements. Since his formative years were spent at Sman-mo monastery, the works associated with this institution are likely the earliest examples of his writing. Likewise, those texts written at Chos-'khor-rtse may contain his more mature and developed ideas, while those completed at Mda'-rin-chen-gling could represent his most refined work. It is certainly befitting that he composed his biography and history of the Kar-gling transmission at Mda'-rin-chen-gling in the prime of his years, when generally romantic sentiments about one's own past become so compelling.

A close examination of Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho's works not only allows us to construct a possible literary chronology (for both his own texts and those that he inherited from his teacher Nyi-zla-'od-zer), but also provides us with a means by which we can properly assess his contributions to the ongoing development of Karma-gling-pa's tradition. Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho is explicity identified as the author and/or redactor of at least twenty-five texts, including a fourfold illustrated cycle of ritual diagrams (*dpe'u-ris-skor*), which are all scattered throughout the many recensions of the Kar-gling cycle *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. These works encompass a variety of topics, most of which relate specifically to the performance of ritual—the two exceptions being his history of the *gter-ma*'s transmission and a memorandum on its "register certificate" (*them-byang zin-bris*).[190] The ritual works include texts for the entire sequence of acts prescribed for the death rites, including confession and expiation (*bskang-bshags*), death ransoms (*'chi-bslu, glud*), fire offerings (*sbyin-sreg*), personal direct introductions (*ngo-sprod*), liberation-upon-hearing instructions (*thos-grol*), dharma protectors (*bka'-srung, chos-skyong*), and even a commentary on a dramatic morality script for ceremonial dance (*'chams*).[191] With this collection of instructional guidelines and liturgical directives, we find clear evidence establishing Rgya-ra-ba as *the* decisive figure in the formation of a specialized ritual program based in part on the teachings of his predecessor, Nyi-zla-'od-zer, and altogether derived from the fourteenth-century revelations of Karma-gling-pa. As the tradition's pioneering systematizer, he did not so much invent the Kar-gling liturgy—the textual records indicate that an early ritual system was already in place—as impose a coherent and well-organized structure on a complex of

[190]The "certificate" (*-byang*) is usually a text received by the revealer before the full discovery of the actual *gter-ma*. The "register certificate" of Karma-gling-pa's treasures, extant only in the form of notes written by Rgya-ra-ba, recounts the myth of origin of the *Zhi-khro* teachings and places them in the broad context of the whole of Buddhist doctrine, outlined in the familiar "nine-vehicle" (*theg-pa-dgu*) system of the Rnying-ma-pa and Bon-po traditions. See T7, vol. 1, fols. 1-6. On the meaning and significance of *-byang* in the Tibetan *gter-ma* tradition see Gyatso 1986, 1993, and na.

[191]See his supplement (*lhan-thabs*) to the *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i gdams-pa srid-pa bar-do rang-grol* discussed above.

pre-existing ideas. In so doing he transformed the shape of the whole tradition and created a systematic program that could be easily disseminated from one monastic community to another. This was all made possible not only by keen scholarly and practical expertise, but also by the strength and security of his institutional support. We have seen that Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho was the first lineage-holder of Karma-gling-pa's teachings to have held an official ecclesiastic position—and of the highest rank no less—within an established monastic center. He appears, moreover, to have thrived in this environment, founding as many as seven additional monasteries within his lifetime. The full significance of these facts should not be underestimated. The evidence leaves us in no doubt that Rgya-ra-ba exercised a profound influence on the institutionalization of this tradition, which prior to his efforts appears to have largely embodied a simple but ill-supported assortment of beliefs and practices devoted to the dead and dying, and that he succeeded in securing its official sponsorship. In so far as it was the monasteries that largely controlled the rituals and prayers for the benefit of the dead, we cannot exclude the possibility that he also transformed this pre-existing tradition into a means of establishing and maintaining prestige and power for his own monastic institutions. By incorporating these practices into an already well-developed system of revenue, e.g., payments for rites performed at the request of individuals or groups from the lay community, Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho may have been able to "sell" other monasteries on the Kar-gling liturgy's social, religious, and economic cachet. Consequently, its distribution among the neighboring monasteries was guaranteed, and its further spread throughout other parts of Tibet was not far in coming. Throughout history the gaining of widespread approval and the securing of a stable institutional base were crucial elements in the preservation and transmission of *gter-ma*. Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho was apparently successful in achieving both aims in his handling of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.

A quick glance at the names and affiliations of those students to whom Rgya-ra-ba transmitted the Kar-gling teachings reveals just how wide his influence extended. In both the traditions of Kaḥ-thog and Dpal-yul—two of the most important Rnying-ma-pa monasteries in later years—the lineage of the Kar-gling transmission is traced back to four disciples—Kaḥ-thog-pa Nam-mkha'-seng-ge (b.1443), A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan, Mkhas-grub Lha-dbang-mtshan-can, and Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba (1497-1568).[192] The Gnas-mdo tradition founded by Karma-chags-med (1613-1678) identifies Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho's student Sprul-sku Thugs-rje-'od-zer.[193] The lineage that is traced through Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol (1604-1669) to the fifth Dalai Lama mentions a certain Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub. The Smin-grol-gling tradition traces the lineage through Rgya-ra-ba to Rig-'dzin Bsod-nams-'od-zer and Nam-mkha'-legs-pa.[194] Finally, in Bhutan, the Kaḥ-thog tradition established by Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1466-1540) traces the Kar-gling transmission back to one lama Ye-shes-blo-gros and Rong-ston-chen-po Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje.[195] We will explore these lineages in the next chapter.

In the end, we can be certain that Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho played a leading and active role in the systematization and diffusion of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* revelations. As principal leader in the early efforts to spread the newly codified Kar-gling system in Tibet—particularly in the south and southeastern territories—Rgya-ra-ba can be linked directly to the foundation of at least five distinct traditions of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. His success in securely establishing these teachings is confirmed by the historians of the tradition and by the frequency in which his name appears in the transmission lists included in the various recensions of the Kar-gling cycle.

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[192]B5, fols. 1-2; DJTY, fols. 181-184; GK; PY, fols. 33-38; GLKT, pp. 66, 77, and 83-84.
[193]DJTY, fols. 181-184; RCKC, fols. 69-70; T5; T8,vol. 2, fols. 1-3.
[194]B2, fols. 15-16; CH; DJTY, fols. 181-184; TLSY, fols. 390-391.
[195]ZDTY, fols. 507-513.

The five traditions that he established comprise practically every important lineage of the *Zhi-khro* transmission in Tibet.

The main lines of development of the liturgical corpus of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, including the texts accompanying the rites of the *Bar-do thos-grol* liturgy, can be traced in the individual histories of the traditions that employed its rituals. As we have seen, the task of identifying the beginning stages in this process, however, is not simple given our fragmented knowledge of the events of the lives of its earliest promoters. The whereabouts of their activities and the relationships they established are all equally crucial to our understanding the complicated history of this influential cycle of texts. Many important questions remain. How did this tradition succeed? How did Karma-gling-pa's teachings come to be so widely diffused throughout the vast reaches of Tibet? And, more generally, how and why did the rituals for the dead and dying recorded in these texts attract so many diverse followers? What was the process that allowed for the liturgy of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, and the *Bar-do thos-grol* in particular, to be incorporated as an almost generic ritual in the standard funeral practices of Tibet?

In this chapter, I have attempted to address some of these basic issues by highlighting a few of the key events in the initial diffusion of the Kar-gling transmissions. On the question of the appeal of this tradition, I want to add that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* rituals gave expression to many of the cultural attitudes toward death and dying which flowed within Tibet during the many centuries leading up through the time of Rgya-ra-ba's contributions. The rituals preserved the ancient Tibetan belief in the vulnerability of the soul (*bla*) and faith in the ritual efficacy of guiding its safe passage (*lam-bstan*) in the realms beyond death. They adapted the old Indo-Buddhist evocations of the long process of the bardo and incorporation into a new existence. They maintained the Buddhist *tantric* emphasis on ritual purification of the dead and of the living, and

drew on technical practices that were directed toward preparation for death and afterlife. Finally, they combined in the mundane forms of prayer and simple performative gestures the popular desire for divine intervention and freedom from fear with the more refined expressions of altruistic concern for the future welfare of the departed. When all of these diverse impulses were blended together in a ritual structure, the result was a balanced and compelling Tibetan Buddhist response to death and dying.

In the final analysis, however, we still cannot ignore the fundamental importance of the support for these rituals from the monastic institution, bringing with it the support of pious laity in the form of patronage. The further significance of the monastic center in the popularizing and spread of the Kar-gling rites is verified in the ecclesiastic histories and biographical accounts of the subsequent generations of followers. In the next chapter, I will attempt to construct a more elaborate picture of this broad tradition by examining in close detail each of the major lineages that preserved and actively propagated the liturgy of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol*.

4.

Lineal Heritage and Local Variation

Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho's codification of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and his pioneering efforts towards institutionalizing its liturgy appear to have been solidified by the latter half of the fifteenth century. In this chapter we will examine Rgya-ra-ba's legacy, while emphasizing also the closely affiliated but distinctive tradition of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. We will explore in close detail each of the major textual traditions by focusing on their most prominent players. In the end we hope to discover how and why the Kar-gling liturgy became so widely influential in Tibet and surrounding regions from the fifteenth century onwards. Particularly, with regard to the diffusion of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*, we will attempt to demonstrate that this literary cycle came to be preserved and maintained by a single lineage which was transmitted through the hierachs of Dwags-po Rtse-le and Kong-po Thang-'brog monasteries, and shortly thereafter through the Padma-gling-pa (Pad-gling) incarnations at Lha-lung monastery in southern Tibet. In the seventeenth century, this tradition reached the great scripture-revealers Gter-bdag-gling-pa (1646-1714) and Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (1647-1710). By the late eighteenth century, the texts of this tradition had been preserved, perhaps for the first time, in a blockprint edition prepared at Rdzogs-chen monastery by the third Rdzogs-chen-pa Nges-don-bstan-'dzin-bzang-po (1759-1792).

As we argued in the previous chapter, establishing Rgya-ra-ba's later activities and the places where he may have been most active is essential to our understanding the earliest phases in the development of the Kar-gling teachings and practices. Although we seem to be able to locate Rgya-ra-ba in the vicinity of Kong-po and southern Dbus, we

still do not know much about where he was active in his mature years. Moreover, we have no knowledge of how long Rgya-ra-ba lived, although we are certain that he completed his most significant work, the *Brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus nor-bu'i phreng-ba*, in the summer of 1499 as a final testament (*kha-chems*)[1] to his spiritual friend lama Chos-rgyal from Mdo-khams.[2] At the end of this work he humbly refers to himself as an "old man" (*rgas-po*). He probably died not long afterwards. We know also that the students he left behind spread the newly redacted Kar-gling revelations throughout parts of Gtsang and the southern districts of Dbus, in Khams, and even across the southern border into Bhutan. We will presume that in these areas from the late fifteenth century onwards the teachings and practices contained in the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* were incorporated into the local customs, some of which had already been well established while still others may only have been in the process of solidification. A brief survey of the major historical features of this period from the time of Rgya-ra-ba until the standardization of Karma-gling-pa's revelations in the eighteenth century reveals some significant factors influencing the later spread of this tradition in Tibet.

In contrast to the somewhat unified but shortlived political and cultural renaissance of the previous century (ending in 1368 with the collapse of the Yüan Dynasty), the history of the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries in Tibet is a picture marred by "fissions and fusions" among competing religious and academic establishments.[3] These conflicting and competitive communities struggled for patronage of the political elite (generally some representative faction of the Chinese Ming, and later Manchu, government) and fought hard for religious identity and legitimation.[4] Reminiscent of the aftermath of the so-called

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[1]Generally the term *kha-chems* is used only in the context of someone's "dying will". Rgya-ra-ba quite obviously wrote this near the end of his life.
[2]LGNB, fol. 48.
[3]Smith 1970, p. 15.
[4]By the late fourteenth century, for example, the Rnying-ma-pa (as well as the Bon-po) had begun to be embroiled in what would become an almost never ending defence against polemical attacks by some of

"Dark Ages" (c.842-1000) in Tibet, political anarchy, family feuds, rivalries between provinces, and the absence of central authority contributed to the rise of new religious communities, as scattered and disparate teaching lineages began consolidating around powerful political and ecomonic centers, each vying for a piece of a proverbial pie. Some of the more remote hotspots would in the seventeenth century become the sites of great monastic complexes in areas to the east previously ignored by the main political spotlight, which before then had been focused primarily on the monumental and antagonistic relations in central and western Tibet between the Dge-lugs-pa in Dbus, the Karma-pa in Gtsang, and their competing Mongol protectors.[5]

The seventeenth century witnessed a sudden and explosive blossoming of the Rnying-ma-pa. With the demise of the Karma-pa hegemony in Gtsang, the Dge-lugs-pa order in Lhasa rose to prominence and the Rnying-ma followers in the surrounding region initially enjoyed the support of that sect's most prominent leader in the person of the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682). In this era, two of the greatest Rnying-ma monasteries were established just south of the Dge-lugs government in central Tibet—Rdo-rje-brag in 1632 and Smin-grol-gling in 1676.[6] In the nomadic area between Dbus and Khams, the Rdzogs-chen monastery (later to become the largest monastery in Rnying-ma history) was founded in 1685.[7] Thirty years earlier and further east in Khams proper, the ancient

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the other Buddhist schools. Among the names of some of the more famous Rnying-ma-pa defenders are 'Gos Lo-tsā-ba Gzhon-nu-dpal (1392-1481), Mnga'-ris-paṇ-chen Padma-dbang-rgyal (1487-1542), and Sog-zlog-pa Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan (1552-1624). See Smith 1969b, p. 5. On Bon-po polemics see Martin 1991a. An intriguing collection of polemical writings by Dkar-brgyud Bstan-'dzin-nor-bu (1859-1959)—the last active representative of Brag-dkar Rta-so monastery in south-western Tibet—concerning the authenticity of the *Bar-do thos-grol* has been recently published in THGL. Here, we find Bstan-'dzin-nor-bu responding to the criticisms of one Rab-'byams-pa-chen-po Thub-bstan, an outspoken Dge-lugs-pa scholar from the monastery of Sera-smad. This work deserves a careful study for the light it promises to shed on Dge-lugs and Rnying-ma polemics.

[5]This story has by now become quite familiar. The most notable accounts can be found in Stein 1972, pp. 81-91; Shakabpa 1984, pp. 91-139; Snellgrove & Richardson 1986, pp. 183-217; Samuel 1993, pp. 499-533; Smith 1996, pp. 105-123.

[6]GKCB, pp. 697-715; Smith 1969b, p. 6-7n.17 & 19.

[7]GKCB, pp. 750-759 and 765-817; Smith 1969b, p. 7n.18.

monastery of Kaḥ-thog Rdo-rje-gdan (first established in 1159) was refurbished in 1656.[8] Soon after, the closely affiliated monastery of Dpal-yul was founded in 1665.[9] Nearly all of these major monastic institutions, and a few more which we will discuss below, preserved and propogated a distinctive tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and followed a specific associated liturgical program. In most cases it was originally from Rgya-ra-ba that these different lines of transmission first emanated. In the sections that follow we will consider each of these lineages in light of their own history and attempt to trace the Kar-gling literature through these varying layers of tradition. In this way, we hope to uncover some of the principal factors behind the success of Rgya-ra-ba's codification following his death in the early decades of the sixteenth century. With Kaḥ-thog we begin with one of the oldest monastic institutions of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition.[10]

1. THE KAḤ-THOG LINEAGES IN BHUTAN AND EASTERN TIBET

The earliest documented evidence, outside the Kar-gling histories themselves, of the transmission of teachings from the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* appears in the autobiography of Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1466-1540), founder of the Lho-mon or Mon-lugs Kaḥ-thog tradition in Bhutan, who was also active in Sikkim.[11] Here, Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan mentions that when he was eighteen (in 1485), after travelling to the western district of Rong-yul, he received the complete initiations (*dbang*), "readings" (*lung*), guiding instructions (*khrid*), direct introduction (*ngo-sprod*), and associated practices (*lag-len*) of Karma-gling-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol* from a certain Rong-

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[8]GLKT; GKCB, pp. 750-759; Smith 1969b, p. 6n.15; Eimer & Tsering 1979, 1981, 1986.

[9]GKCB, pp. 759-765; Smith 1969b, p. 6n.16; Tsering Lama 1988

[10]Richardson mentions that Kaḥ-thog "takes its name from a hill, on the slopes of which the monastery lies, bearing near its summit marks resembling the letter *kaḥ*". Richardson 1998, p. 382.

[11]See SHAR and Aris 1979, pp. 153-154.

ston-chen-po Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje.[12] This exchange is corroborated in the accession list (*thob-yig*) of Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (1708-1736), the first Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul of Bhutan, where the names lama Ye-shes-blo-gros[13] and Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje appear first in the lineal succession of the *Zhi-khro-dgongs-pa rang-grol* passing from Rgya-btsun Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.[14] In this series, Ye-shes-blo-gros is indicated as having bestowed the Kar-gling teachings upon Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, the "great teacher from Rong" (*rong-ston chen-po*) from whom Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, in turn, received the *Bar-do thos-grol*.[15] It appears then that the precise location of Rong or Rong-yul is

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[12]SHAR. fol. 57.4-6: *de nas rong yul phyogs su song nas ni / rong ston chen po nam mkha' rdo rje la / sgyu sprul zhi khro phur gsum dbang lung dang / ma mgon gnam sras dam can bcas pa yi / rjes gnang bsgrub skor rang rang chos tshan rnams / ma lus thams cad yongs su rdzogs pa dang / khyad par bar do thos grol zhes bya ba / sgam po rdar nas kar ma gling pas gton / de'i dbang lung khrid dang ngo sprod sogs nga [?] lag len thams cad bad bdag gis yogs rdzogs zhus.*

The *Bar-do thos-grol* is mentioned again by name in several other passages (see fols. 134, 137, 148, and 174), as well as the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod* (fol. 160). I have thus far found no information on the identity of Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, although it is possible that he was the father of 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs, a renowned figure in the lineage of the *snying-thig* system of Klong-chen-pa (1308-1363) and an early link in the transmission of one of the two Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* traditions which reached the fifth Dalai Lama (see below). See GKCB, p. 214-240, esp. p. 225; DLSY, fol. 91. In the historical record from this period there also exists one Zhang-ston Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, a student of Sangs-rgyas-rin-chen (1350-1431), from whom the former received the Anuyoga transmission. From Sangs-rgyas-rin-chen this transmission line was spread as follows: Zhang-ston Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, Sha-mi Rdo-rje-rgyal-mtshan, Rig-'dzin G.yu-'brug-rdo-rje, Sog-bzlog-pa Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan (1552-1624). See Bradburn 1996, p. 177. For what it is worth, a Kun-mkhyen Rong-ston-chen-po from Shar Rgyal-mo-rong is briefly discussed in GKCB, p. 948, although it is not likely that the two are related. This is Rong-ston Shes-bya-kun-rig (alias Śākya-rgyal-mtshan, 1367-1449), founder of 'Phan-po Na-lendra monastery. On this important Sa-skya-pa scholastic, see Jackson 1988 and 1989, esp. pp. 6-8. Curiously, there exists a manuscript arrangement of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* from the monastery of 'Phan-po Na-lendra. See facsimile edition T6. I have found no information, however, about the details of this tradition.

[13]This may be Gzhag-bla Ye-shes-'bum from Nyag-rong, a student of Mkhas-grub Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan (b.1395) and a contemporary of Kha-ba-dkar-po Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. See GLKT, pp. 60 and 72-73. Dan Martin has mistaken the latter figure for Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, but the two are in fact separate individuals. See Martin 1997, p. 58; Cuevas, "Rgya-ra-ba".

[14]ZDTY, ffol. 512-513. Here the succession of names is given as follows: Karma-gling-pa, Skyes-mchog Nyi-zla-chos-rje, lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer, Rgya-btsun Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, lama Ye-shes-blo-gros, Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, Mkhas-grub Bsod-nams-bzang-po [=Rnam-grol-ye-shes-bzang-po, the son of Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan], Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan, Chos-rje Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin, Chos-rje Susarvamantra, Bslab-gsum-'dzin-pa Grags-pa-rgya-mtsho, Dpal Jñānasiddhi [=Ye-shes-dngos-grub], Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal.

[15]Ye-shes-blo-gros, however, may not have given the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* to Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje as the line of transmission appears to suggest. The period in which Rgya-ra-ba must have flourished (c.1451-1499) and the early contact between Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje and Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (in 1485) leads me to believe that lama Ye-shes-blo-gros and Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje were contemporaries and may have each received the Kar-gling transmission simultaneously, or at least within a short period of time of each other. It is common for lineage lists to place two simultaneous transmissions in hierarchical succession, making it appear as if the individual on top presented the teaching directly to the indiviual below. In some cases a footnote (*mchan*) is added after the second name alerting the reader to this fact.

crucial to our story, since this may be one of the earliest areas in Tibet where Rgya-ra-ba's freshly codified liturgical system was first disseminated. The fact that this was specifically the *Bar-do thos-grol* of Karma-gling-pa is also of particular importance. I believe the name Rong-yul refers to the valley in Gtsang (approximately fifty kilometers northeast of Rgyal-rtse) known by its river, the Rong-chu, which flows north into the Gtsang-po at Rin-spungs.[16] This is an area famous for its rulers, the Rin-spungs princes, who came into power during the reign of the Phag-mo-gru leader, Gong-ma Grags-pa-rgyal-mtshan (1374-1440), and ruled until the mid-sixteenth century.[17]

Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan

As his title indicates, Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan was from Kaḥ-thog in eastern Tibet. Born in Nyag-rong,[18] he spent his formative years at this great Rnying-ma institution. He studied primarily with 'Chad-nyan-pa Sgro-mdog-pa Nam-mkha'-dpal,[19] author of the *Dngul-dkar me-long* [*Silver Mirror*]—a commentary on the *Gsang-ba'i snying-po* (*Guhyagarbha*)—and Nyag-rong Bzhag-bla Ye-shes-'bum, master of the threefold *Mdo-rgyud-sems* [*Anuyoga Sūtra, Mahāyoga Tantra, and Atiyoga Mind-series*] who late in life restored the sacred sites of Zur 'Ug-pa-lung and Gsang-sngags-gling in the district of Gzhis-ka-rtse.[20] At some point in his later years, Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan traveled to Lhasa and Bsam-yas and exchanged teachings with Mnga'-ris Mahāpaṇḍita Padma-

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[16]Ferrari 1958, p. 70 and 162n.630-631, 634; Dorje 1996, pp. 319-320; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 6 (J14-15). The lower Rong-chen valley was the site of Khams-bu-lung where Byang-bdag Bkra-shis-stobs-rgyal (alias Karma-guru, 1550-1602) recovered *gter-ma*. On the life of this significant figure in Rnying-ma history see discussion below.

[17]See Tucci 1949, pp. 641-642; Shakabpa 1984, pp. 86-90; Ahmad 1995, p. 161.

[18]Dorje 1996, pp. 547; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 10 (G-H25).

[19]GLKT, p. 72.

[20]GLKT, p. 73. 'Ug-pa-lung, in the village of Gsang-sngags-gling, was the seat of the Zur clan and principal center of the Rnying-ma scriptural tradition (*bka'-ma*) during and after the persecution and suppression of Buddhism by the emperor Glang-dar-ma (alias Khri-bdu-dum-brtsan, c.803-842). See Roerich 1949, pp. 110-124; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 617-649; Dorje 1996, p. 343. Gyurme Dorje reports that a temple at Gsang-sngags-gling was restored in 1421. Could this have taken place through the efforts of Bzhag-bla Ye-shes-'bum? See Dorje 1996, p. 343.

dbang-rgyal (1487-1542),[21] from whom he received, among other doctrines, the transmission of the *'Gyu-sprul zhi-khro [Peaceful and Wrathful Deities of Magical Emanation]*. From Lhasa he journeyed further south across the border to Spa-gro Stag-tshang in western Bhutan, where he established the monastery of O-rgyan-rtse-mo.[22]

We may never know fully the actual events surrounding Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan's meeting with Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje and the early transmission of the Kar-gling teachings in the Rong area of Gtsang, but what we can suggest is that both the *Bar-do thos-grol* and the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* did pass through that particular region very early in the history of its diffusion. Furthermore, we can be assured that with Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century the *Bar-do thos-grol* was carried over for the first time into Bhutan (and probably Sikkim as well). Also, it seems that the first institution in that region to foster the liturgy of the Kar-gling *gter-ma* was that of O-rgyan-rtse-mo monastery, following the Kaḥ-thog-pa affiliated tradition of the Lho-mon, or Mon-lugs, founded by Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan and his son Rnam-grol-ye-shes-bzang-po. This tradition, according to Aris, was divided into two main branches, one in Shar and the other more prominent one in Spa-gro.[23] We can only imagine what role the Kar-gling liturgy played in these communities, since the Kaḥ-thog tradition unfortunately did not appear to survive the 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud theocracy established in the middle years of the seventeenth century. At that time, Aris speculates, the two Kaḥ-thog branches were absorbed into the new state, along with I would suppose some of their more

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[21]Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 805-808; Bradburn 1995, pp. 207-208.

[22]GLKT, p. 74. Aris mistakenly attributes the founding of this monastery to Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan's teacher, Bzhag-bla Ye-shes-'bum for whom he also gives the erroneous dates of 1245-1311. See Aris 1979, p. 153.

[23]Aris 1979, p. 153. Aris lists the main monasteries of each of the two branches. The main institutions of the Shar tradition were Spyi-rdzong at Lud-mtsho-ri, and Ba-ling and Theg-chen-sgang in Mkho-thang. The Spa-gro branch was attached to Dol-po Sha-la-brag, Mkha'-'gro-spyi-'dus, Btsan-stong-chos-sding, and Byi-dgon-gong-ma.

accessible teachings and religious customs.[24] Perhaps the widespread appeal in Bhutan of the *Bar-do thos-grol* witnessed in more recent centuries can in part be traced back to this monumental event of political and religious appropriation.[25]

Rgya-ra-ba's strong connections to the Kaḥ-thog mother monastery in Khams are beyond question. Although we lack sufficient evidence to suggest that he ever visited this institution, he defintely cultivated close contacts with several of the monastery's more prominent leaders and teachers of his day.[26] Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho is mentioned several times by name in 'Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan's important history of the Kaḥ-thog monastery, where it is reported that Nam-mkha'-seng-ge (b.1443), the first teacher in the lineage of Drung, and A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan, a leading scholar of Kaḥ-thog in that period, received directly from him the complete Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* initiations.[27] This exchange inaugurated two of the five major Kar-gling lineages traced back to Rgya-ra-ba and preserved in the Kaḥ-thog tradition. In addition to the Bhutanese transmission of Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, there is also the line passing from the fifth Drung Lha-dbang-rdo-rje, through Dpang-ston Karma-guru (alias Byang-bdag Bkra-shis-stobs-rgyal, 1550-1602) to Stag-bla Padma-rgyal-mtshan, and from him to Padma-mati (or Padma-blo-gros, 1591-1642), and finally, the transmission spreading from Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba Las-phro-gling-pa (1497-1568) through 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen-phun-tshogs (1509-1557) and again to Padma-rgyal-mtshan. Three of these transmission lineages have been given specific names by the tradition itself. The *He-lugs*, or "He-pa

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[24]Aris 1979, p. 154.

[25]Supporting this view, Françoise Pommaret has related to me that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* is indeed extremely popular in Bhutan and that its representations appear in a variety of different forms (e-mail communication of September 11, 1998). In this regard, we should also note that the great majority of extant xylograph prints of the *Bar-do thos-grol* were originally produced from blocks housed at various printeries throughout Bhutan, including those of Spa-gro-rdzong and Bum-thang Thar-pa-gling. See B1, B1a, B2, B3, B4, B5, and DH. These printing blocks, however, do not represent a tradition preserved by the Kaḥ-thog followers of Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan. Instead, they represent a mixture of lineage affiliations ending finally with Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. See discussion in Chapter 5.

[26]GLKT, pp. 66, 77, and 83-84.

[27]GLKT, p. 77 and 83-84; Eimer 1979, p. 476.

Tradition", refers to the teaching lineage that eventually reached Lha-bzo He-pa-chos-'byung through A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan.[28] The *Stag-bla-lugs*, "Tradition of Stag-bla", is the lineage of Padma-rgyal-mtshan and Padma-mati from Drung Lha-dbang-rdo-rje,[29] while the *Mon-lugs*, or "Mon (Bhutan) Tradition", as we noted, is that lineage originating with Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan.

During the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, the particular Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* collections handed down at the various Kaḥ-thog affiliated institutions probably included a number of supplemental texts prepared by the respective representatives of each of the traditions named above. In the unfortunate absence of an actual set of manuscripts dating from this early period, we can only presume based on comparative analysis of the existing collections that the basic structure of the earliest Kaḥ-thog *Zhi-khro* must have consisted of the core works discussed in Chapter 2, including most prominently the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*, the bardo prayers, and some form of the *Bar-do drug-khrid* instructions. In addition, we can be relatively certain that the extensive liturgical works of Rgya-ra-ba detailing his systematized ritual program were also included. Brief commentaries and liturgical digests from the pens of the leaders of the various Kaḥ-thog traditions during this period must have been added as well, although we can identify only a few examples of such works in current recensions.[30]

In the section that follows, we will briefly attempt to document the ways in which the individual Kaḥ-thog transmissions in Tibet were constituted by focusing on the affiliated persons and circumstances responsible for the propogation of the Kar-gling teachings. We begin with what may have been the earliest transmission involving persons connected

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[28]GLKT, p. 77 and 84; GK, fol. 2

[29]GK, fol. 2.

[30]See particularly the contents of edition GK.

explicitly to the Kaḥ-thog monastery in Tibet. This is the tradition that I wish to call the *Drung-lugs*, "Drung Tradition", for reasons that will be made clear below.

The Drung Tradition

Helmut Eimer and Pema Tsering have established, based on information provided in the *Chos-'byung kun-gsal me-long* [*Religious History called "Mirror Illuminating All Things"*] of Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims (1902-1973),[31] that there were four epochs in the history of Kaḥ-thog-pa's abbatial administration:

1. The epoch of the thirteen *Rgyal-tshab* (deputy), presumably identical with the thirteen *Bla-rabs*;
2. The epoch of the *Drung* (chief administrator);
3. The period of Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje (1615-1672) and Klong-gsal-snying-po (1625-1692), when the monastery was refurbished;
4. The epoch of the religious ministers ("Geistlichen") of Kaḥ-thog following the end of the seventeenth century (during the period of the thirteen members of the *Rmog* lineage?).[32]

The second and third periods are the most relevant for our present consideration.

Eimer and Tsering have spoken of a reform in the organization of Kaḥ-thog monastery sometime in the early fifteenth century shortly after the term of office of the thirteenth and final Rgyal-tshab, Bu-'bor Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan (1395-1458).[33] The position of "leader-in-residence" (*gdan-sa-pa*) had been reorganized and the responsibilities of the Rgyal-tshab—who to this point had been functioning as "abbot"

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[31] Interestingly, Dpal-ldan-tshul-khrims was a follower of the Bon-po tradition. See Martin 1997, p. 189.
[32] Eimer & Tsering 1979, p. 462. For a list of these names with brief biographical sketches, see GLKT, pp. 15-94.
[33] Eimer & Tsering 1979, p. 463 and 476; cf. also GKCB, p. 751.

(lit., "great scholar", *mkhan-chen*)—shifted over to the "chief administrator", the Drung. The suggestion has been offered that this reform might have been due to the changing role of the Drung in religious affairs.[34] Soon, alongside the Drung, a new office was also added which seems to have developed out of the lineage of scholars (*mkhan-po*) traditionally affiliated with the Rgyal-tshab.[35] This was the office of "teaching-attendant" (*'chad-nyan-pa*), which would in later years become increasingly more powerful than the Drung itself.[36]

Drung Nam-mkha'-seng-ge

The first in the new line of monastic leaders, the Drung, was Nam-mkha'-seng-ge (alias Brtson-'grus-'bum-pa),[37] who prophecy stated was to be born in a pig year (probably 1431 or 1443). He was a student of Bu-'bor Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan and Byang-sems-chos-rje,[38] and served as the chief deputy (*rgyal-tshab drung*) of Lab-ston Nam-mkha'-rin-chen.[39] The latter at that time had been acting as servant (*bran*) to Ye-shes-rgyal-mtshan.[40] In addition, Nam-mkha'-seng-ge was recognized by the *gter-ston* Ratna-gling-pa (1403-1479) as one of his own chief "doctrine-masters" (*chos-bdag*).[41] But

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[34]Eimer & Tsering 1979, p. 463.
[35]GLKT, p. 55-65.
[36]Eimer & Tsering 1979, p. 476; GLKT, pp. 69-85; GKCB, p. 751.
[37]This contradicts the view of Eimer and Tsering who identify Lab-ston Nam-mkha'-rin-chen as holder of this first position. See Eimer & Tsering 1979, p. 476. 'Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan and Guru Bkra-shis, on the contrary, both agree that Nam-mkha'-seng-ge was the first Drung-rabs. See GLKT, p. 66; GKCB, p. 751.
[38]GLKT, p. 63.
[39]GLKT, p. 62.
[40]GLKT, p. 66; GKCB, p. 751. Unless otherwise noted the details of Nam-mkha'-seng-ge's life are drawn from these two sources.
[41]History records a number of notable connections between Ratna-gling-pa and the holders of Karma-gling-pa's lineage. Besides Rgya-ra-ba and Nam-mkha'-seng-ge, another of Ratna-gling-pa's disciples associated with the Kar-gling tradition was one Dgongs-'dus-pa Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, from whom the Zur-mang lineage of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* is said to have emanated. See B3, fol. 63. Moreover, we should note with some interest that Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, the great ancestral patriarch of Sming-grol-gling, was believed to have been Ratna-gling-pa's immediate reincarnation. See discussion below.

most importantly, Nam-mkha'-seng-ge was a student of Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho from whom he received the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, including the *Bar-do drug-khrid*. This connection between Rgya-ra-ba and Nam-mkha'-seng-ge is attested to not only in the Kaḥ-thog history of 'Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan, but also in the colophon of Nyi-zla-'od-zer's *'Og-sgo bde-chen*, where this exchange between teacher and student is explicitly stated:

> "These guru instructions entitled *'Og-sgo bde-chen 'dod-chags rang-grol-gyi nyams-khrid* were composed during degenerate times by the learned beggar (*ku-sā-li*) named Suryacandraraśmi [Nyi-zla-'od-zer] at the behest of his mudra (consort). The writing was begun on an auspicious day of the pig month [=eighth month] in the monkey year at Thang-'brog monastery in Kong-yul. May its virtues help all beings attain quickly the great bliss of the three bodies. Scholars asked that it be written in order to discern flaws (*skyon*) and repeated contradictory connections (*'gal-'brel zlos*). In the presence of the Venerable Suryacandra, who was supremely realized through intrinsic great bliss, this text was requested by Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. He, in turn, bestowed it upon Kaḥ-thog-pa Nam-mkha'-seng-ge, and from him I requested it."[42]

Leaving aside for the moment the important reference in this statement to Kong-po Thang-'brog monastery, the colophon above provides some helpful information about one of the earliest Kaḥ-thog transmissions of Karma-gling-pa's textual tradition. The author, a student of Nam-mkha'-seng-ge, does not give his name but instead refers to himself in the

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[42]T7, vol. 3, fols. 480-481: *zab lam rdzogs rim nyams khrid bde ba rang grol zhes bya ba / guru'i gdams pa mudra nyid kyis bskul ba'i don du snyigs ma'i ku sa li suryacandrarasmi'i ming can gyis kong yul lta bar thang 'brog dgon pa tu sprel lo phag gi zla ba'i dus bzang la 'di brtsam pa'i dge bas 'gro kun sku gsum bde ba chen po myur du thob bar gyur cig / 'gal 'brel zlos skyon ma brtogs lu col bris / 'di la mkhas rnams bjod pa mdzad par zhu / bde chen lhan skyes kyis nyams rtogs phul phyin pa'i rje btsun suryacandra'i drung du nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos zhus de la kaḥ thog pa nam mkha' seng ges zhus / de la bdag gis zhus so.*

first person. Consequently, we can only guess his identity. The obvious candidate would have been Nam-mkha'-seng-ge's nephew, Rdo-rje-blo-gros, the second-in-line for the office of Drung.[43] With him as acting resident-chief (*gdan-sa-pa drung*), probably in the first decades of the sixteenth century, the assistant position of 'Chad-nyan-pa, or "teaching-attendant", was also established. This office was filled by another of Nam-mkha'-seng-ge's nephews, A-gzi Bsod-nams-'bums from Nyag-rong.[44] Unfortunately, we have no further information about this particular transmission lineage, and so we can only presume that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was passed down from Nam-mkha'-seng-ge to the next two Drung successors, Mgon-po-rdo-rje and Lha-dbang-rdo-rje.[45] We should keep in mind that the managing office of Kaḥ-thog at this time had just recovered from changes brought about by unspecified reforms, and perhaps consequently the duration of any given position in the monastery's governing body may not have been long-term. It is also possible that the chief officer of Drung was meant to serve as monastic leader for only a few years. This short-term of office is corroborated by the fact that our main protagonists appear to have been contemporaries, although the precise age difference is not clear. In any case, the important point to stress here is that the first succession of the Drung of Kaḥ-thog apparently included some of the earliest holders of Karma-gling-pa's tradition in Tibet, and as such this lineage of teachers may have played a decisive role in its later diffusion.

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[43]GLKT, p. 67.
[44]GLKT, p. 70-71.
[45]We should point out the similarity of these two Kaḥ-thog-pa names and those of two obscure figures listed consecutively in the primary *Bar-do thos-grol* lineages; namely, lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje and Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal (Lha'i-dbang-po). Was there possibly a historical connection between them or were the similarities just simply a coincidence? See discussion below.

'Chad-nyan-pa A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan

During the term of office of the fourth Drung Mgon-po-rdo-rje as abbot, or more precisely, chief resident (*gdan-sa-pa*), and Sgro-mdog-pa Nam-mkha'-dpal as the first official "teaching-attendant" (*'chad-nyan-pa*), a scholar by the name of A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan was working at Kaḥ-thog.[46] He studied under both Byang-sems-chos-rje and Nam-mkha'-dpal, as well as Kun-dga'-nyi-ma-bzang-po, chief disciple of Tibet's great engineer Thang-stong-rgyal-po (1385-1510).[47] According to 'Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan, he received from Kun-dga'-nyi-ma-bzang-po the complete instructions on the Rdzogs-chen *gter-ma Kun-tu-bzang-po'i dgongs-pa zang(s)-thal* [*Unimpeded Wisdom-Mind of Samantabhadra*], after which he had a vision of Padmasambhava.[48] Later, he offered manuscript copies (*phyag-dpe*) of this scripture to the ascetic Byang-chub-seng-ge, who was living in the Byang-seng caves of Kaḥ-thog. When Lha-dbang-rdo-rje, the fifth in the line of Drung, took the office of abbot, Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan was promoted and became the second 'Chad-nyan-pa of Kaḥ-thog. He traveled extensively throughout Dbus and Gtsang, where it appears he first met Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho.[49] From Rgya-ra-ba, Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan received the complete initiations of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, which, in turn, he then presented to Lha-bzo He-pa-chos-'byung, who would later become the fourth 'Chad-nyan-pa.[50] This

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[46]Eimer & Tsering 1979, p. 476; cf. also GLKT, p. 67 and 76; GKCB, p. 751.
[47]GLKT, p. 76. On the achievements and legacy of Thang-ston-rgyal-po, see Gyatso 1981 and 1991.
[48]GLKT, p. 76. The *Kun-tu-bzang-po'i dgongs-pa zang(s)-thal* was revealed in 1366 by Rig-'dzin Rgod-ldem-can (1337-1408) and contains a number of texs dealing with *zhi-khro* mandalas and *bar-do* practices, e.g., *Rdzogs-pa chen-po chos-nyid mngon-sum zhi-khro lhun-grub-kyi phrin-las*, *Zhi-khro rab-'byams-kyi bsnyen-sgrub-kyi dmigs-rim grub-mchog zhal-lung bzang-po*, *Rigs-drug 'khor-ba gnas-'dren*, *Bar-do lnga'i ngo-sprod*, *Bar-do lnga'i snyan-brgyud thams-cad-kyi phyi-mo*, *Bar-do 'od-gsal sgron-ma'i dbu*, and *Bar-do rang-gi snang-ba thams-cad nges-par bstan-pa'i rgyud*. A thorough discussion of this *gter-ma* cycle by Peter Schwieger is contained in Schuh 1985; cf. also Dargyay 1978, pp. 129-132; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 780-783; Bradburn 1995, pp. 175-176. The texts themselves are found scattered throughout the *Rin-chen gter-mdzod* and also in separate volumes, cf. I-Tib-73-902355 (1973) and I-Tib-79-901828 (1979).
[49]We know also that he spent time in Kong-po and in north-central Tibet at Rwa-sgreng. See GLKT, p. 77.
[50]GLKT, p. 77.

particular lineage of the Kar-gling transmission came to be known as the *Zhi-khro He-lugs*, or the "He-pa Tradition of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities". It was this tradition that was transmitted through the Dpal-yul lineages of Kun-bzang-shes-rab (1636-1698).[51]

Rong-po Dkon-mchog-rdo-rje

A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan's chief student was Rong-po Dkon-mchog-rdo-rje, to whom he taught the general instructions on Mahāmudra and Rdzogs-chen, and especially those of the *Kun-tu-bzang-po'i dgongs-pa zang(s)-thal*. The Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* is not mentioned by name in this context, although we can safely assume that this was included among the teachings Dkon-mchog-rdo-rje received from his teacher. Dkon-mchog-rdo-rje, practiced at Kaḥ-thog for a long period of time before he traveled to Rong-yul, where he remained in strict retreat until the end of his life.[52] Although we have no substantial evidence to support the claim that this teacher from Rong and Rong-ston-chen-po Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, the teacher of Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, were one and the same person, it seems more than coincidence that Rgya-ra-ba's grand-disciple, Dkon-mchog-rdo-rje, was stationed in Rong-yul at what appears to be the same time that Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, also in Rong-yul, was transmitting the *Bar-do thos-grol* teachings to Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan. If, on the contrary, the two teachers were in fact separate individuals, then we can still suggest that they probably had contact with one another and,

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[51]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 30. Oddly enough, however, the direct transmission of these teachings from Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan to He-pa-chos-'byung is not indicated in the lineage lists found in the Dpal-yul recensions of the Kar-gling text cycle. Instead, the standard names of Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan's Kaḥ-thog lineage are given in the following order: Rong-po Dkon-mchog-rdo-rje, Hor-po Śākya-rgyal-mtshan, Byang-chub-seng-ge, and Bu-'bor Bkra-shis-rgyal-mtsho. See GK and PY, fols. 33-38. This transmission line represents the main lineage of the *Dgongs-pa zang(s)-thal*, with which Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan had become especially associated. See GLKT, pp. 77-79; cf. also Eimer and Tsering 1979, p. 477.

[52]GLKT, p. 77.

from this, argue that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was certainly available in the Rong-yul territory quite early in the history of its diffusion.

Drung Lha-dbang-rdo-rje and Drung Mgon-po-rdo-rje

Sometime in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century when A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan was 'Chad-nyan-pa of Kaḥ-thog, the fifth holder of the office of Drung was Lha-dbang-rdo-rje.[53] Although the history books tell us nothing about the life of this ecclesiastic leader and teacher, there is reason to speculate that he is the same individual referred to in various Kar-gling lineages as Lha-dbang-mtshan-can and Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal. The former name appears in the lineage supplications (*brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*) found in three of the four recensions of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* affiliated with the Kaḥ-thog tradition.[54] Here, a certain Lha-dbang-mtshan-can is indicated as having received the Kar-gling teachings directly from Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, and then to have transmitted them to one Bstan-'dzin-chos-kyi-rgyal-po (also Ka-dag Ting-'dzin-chos-rgyal). As we shall soon see, this latter individual may actually have been 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen-phun-tshogs.

The other instance of the name Lha-dbang—Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal or Lha'i-dbang-po—is found in the lineage series connected with Karma-gling-pa's obscure text cycle *Dbang-bzhi 'phrad-tshad rang-grol*. Curiously, it is this list of teachers that is also associated almost exclusively with the *Bar-do thos-grol*. Here, Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal's teacher is indicated as being one Mgon-po-rdo-rje, a student not of Rgya-ra-ba or even of Rgya-ra-ba's root lama, Nyi-zla-'od-zer, but rather of Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje. Is it just mere coincidence that Mgon-po-rdo-rje was also the name of Kaḥ-thog-pa's

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[53]GLKT, p. 67; GKCB, p. 751.
[54]See B5, fols. 1b-2b; DJTY, fols. 181-184; GK.

fourth Drung, and that the next-in-line for that office was a person named Lha-dbang, a direct associate of Rgya-ra-ba's student Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan? Questions of contemporaneity and proximity must be taken into consideration before we make too hasty an identification. The names Mgon-po-rdo-rje, Lha-dbang-mtshan-can, and Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal may indeed refer to the two successive Drung leaders of Kaḥ-thog during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century, but in terms of the lineage of the *Dbang-bzhi 'phrad-tshad rang-grol*—and also that of the apparently related *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*—we must still contend with the apparent anachronism of the fourth Drung receiving teachings from the much earlier figure of Nyi-zla-chos-rje. Recall again, however, that the fifth Drung officer of Kaḥ-thog, Lha-dbang-mtshan-can, was not only a contemporary but also a working associate of A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan. With this in mind, we return to the specific Kaḥ-thog lineage emanating from Drung Lha-dbang-rdo-rje, the tradition referred to as the Stag-bla-lugs.

The Stag-bla Tradition

According to some of the Kaḥ-thog lineage supplications, Lha-dbang-mtshan-can, the fifth Drung, bestowed the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* upon Bstan-'dzin-chos-kyi-rgyal-po, who, in turn, presented it to Karma-guru, the last of the princely lineage of Byang Ngam-rings and a leading master of the Byang-gter tradition of Rig-'dzin Rgod-ldem-can (1337-1408). Who was this teacher Bstan-'dzin-chos-kyi-rgyal-po? Our lack of information concerning the life of Lha-dbang-rdo-rje requires that we search elsewhere for clues in the biography of Karma-guru.[55] Here, we quickly learn that Karma-guru was a student of

[55]On the life of Karma-guru, see GKCB, pp. 556-562; ZCGT, pp. 267 and 272; GLKT, p. 79; Karmay 1988b, pp. xiii, 26, 30, 42, 51, 54, 64, 66-68, and 74; Bradburn 1995, pp. 224-225. On the clan of Byang Ngam-rings, one of Tibet's original thirteen myriarchs (*khri-dpon*), see Tucci 1949, pp. 631-632.

Rin-chen-phun-tshogs-chos-kyi-rgyal-po, the sixth abbot of the Bka'-brgyud-pa monastery of 'Bri-gung-mthil in northern Dbus.[56]

'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen-phun-tshogs

Rin-chen-phun-tshogs is familiar to us from a reference in the fifth Dalai Lama's *gsan-yig*, where his name appears in the list of lineage-holders of the *'Pho-ba 'jag-tshugs-ma'i nyams-'khrid*, a *gter-ma* revealed by none other than Karma-gling-pa's father, Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas (see Chapter 3).[57] Matthew Kapstein has recently noted that this *gter-ma* of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas lies at the center of a famous 'Bri-gung-pa festival called the *'Pho-ba chen-mo*, which incidentally was first established by Rin-chen-phun-tshogs.[58] Further 'Bri-gung Kar-gling affiliations are revealed in an alternative Kaḥ-thog-pa lineage from the accession list of Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che, in which the name Rgyal-dbang Rin-chen-phun-tshogs appears as the student of one Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba.[59] In this list, Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba is indicated as having received the Kar-gling transmission directly from Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. As it turns out both Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba and 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs were each student and teacher to the other.[60] Therefore, it is highly probable that the former transmitted the Kar-gling

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[56]GKCB, p. 557; Bradburn 1995, pp. 216 and 224. On the life of 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs, see BDGR, pp. 185-201; GKCB, pp. 238-239, 463, 557, and 715-716; ZCGT, pp. 181, 241, 261-262, and 308; Sperling 1992, pp. 741-750; Bradburn 1995, pp. 216-217.

[57]DLSY, vol. 3, fols. 175.3-176.4. Also in this same work (fol. 429.1-3) we find an intriguing series of names in the lineage of Padma-las-'brel-rtsal's *Sgab-'dre'i 'khor-lo dang bcas-pa phyag-len dam-'khrid*. Here we may note the presence of the three earliest lineage-holders of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma*, including both his father and his son. The lineage in that context is arranged in the following order: Gter-ston Rin-chen-tshul-rdor [=Padma-las-'brel-rtsal, b.1228], Grub-chen Legs-ldan-pa [=Shwa-ban Rgyal-sras Legs-pa, 1290-1366], Mtshungs-med Rang-byung-rdo-rje [=Karma-pa III, 1284-1339], Mkhas-grub Nor-bu-bzang-po, Sprul-sku Mkha'-spyod-dbang-po [=Zhwa-dmar-pa II, 1350-1405], Chos-rje Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, De-dbon Nyi-zla-chos-rje, lama Nyi-ma-zla-ba [=Nyi-zla-'od-zer, b.1409/1421], Drin-can Kumāratha [=Kumārādza ?], Drin-can Yadyavajra, Lha-sras Rnam-sprul 'Bri-gung-pa Rin-chen-phun-tshogs (1509-1557), Ras-chung Rnam-sprul Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho, and G.yu-sgra'i sprul-pa Kun-dga'-tshe-mchog.

[58]The festival was later instituted by the brothers Dkon-mchog rin-chen (1590-1654) and Rig-'dzin-chos-grags (1595-1659). See Kapstein 1998, pp. 95-119, esp. p. 180n.23.

[59]DJTY, fol. 184.

[60]See BGDR, pp. 189 and 201; GKCB, pp. 238-239 and 463; ZCGT, p. 181; Bradburn 1995, p. 210.

teachings to the latter. In the final analysis, it seems clear that Bstan-'dzin-chos-kyi-rgyal-po and 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs-chos-kyi-rgyal-po must be one and the same person. This great teacher was quite obviously a pivotal figure in the transmission of both Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas' and Karma-gling-pa's visionary teachings during the middle years of the sixteenth century.

Karma-guru Byang-bdag Bkra-shis-stob-rgyal

Returning now to Karma-guru and the so-called Stag-bla tradition. Byang-bdag Bkra-shis-stob-rgyal was born in upper G.yas-ru in Dbus-Gtsang as the son of Nam-mkha'-rin-chen, a descendant of the kings of Mi-nyag.[61] He studied with a number of leading Tibetan masters, such as Mnga'-ris Legs-ldan-rdo-rje (1512-1625), *gter-ston* Shes-rab-'od-zer (1518-1584), 'Brug-pa Padma-dkar-po (1527-1592), Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-dbang-po (1550-1625), and, of course, 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs. The latter two individuals shared a mutual teacher/student relationship with Karma-guru, who appears to have been a major figure in the transmission of Rdzogs-chen teachings, especially those of the *Mkha'-'gro-snying-thig* [*Seminal Heart of the Ḍākinis*].[62] His own work evidently left a lasting impression on the fifth Dalai Lama.[63] But he is perhaps most famous for a short *gter-ston* prayer entitled *Gter-brgya'i rnam-thar don-bdus gsol-'debs* [*Supplications and Synopsis of the Biographies of One Hundred Treasure-Revealers*],[64] which was used as the basis for two of the major sources that we have relied on in the present study; namely Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-gi-rgyal-po's *Lo-rgyus gter-bton chos-'byung* and the fifth Dalai Lama's section on *gter-ma* in his *gsan-yig*.[65] Incidentally,

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[61] GKCB, p. 556-562; Tucci 1949, p. 631-632. G.yas-ru is mentioned in Wylie 1962, pp. 64 and 128.
[62] Thondup 1996, pp. 32 and 37.
[63] See Karmay 1988b., *passim*.
[64] See *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*, vol. 2, fols. 1-31.
[65] See comment in Martin 1997, p. 110, no. 229.

another famous biographer of *gter-ston*, Sha-gzugs-pa Bkra-shis-rnam-rgyal, was said to be a student of Karma-guru's son, Byang-bdag Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi-dbang-po (1580-1639), founder of the Rnying-ma monastery of Rdo-rje-brag and master of the Byang-gter tradition.[66] Perhaps Sha-gzugs-pa may also have had Karma-guru's "prayer" in mind when composing his own *gter-ma* history.

As we have noted above, some transmission records indicate that Karma-guru received the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* from 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs, although we do not know where or when this transmission may have taken place. We are certain, however, that Karma-guru transmitted these teachings to Stag-bla Padma-rgyal-mtshan, student of *gter-ston* Zhig-po-gling-pa (1524-1583) and Sog-bzlog-pa Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan (1552-1624). At the request of 'Chad-nyan-pa Bu-'bor Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho, Padma-rgyal-mtshan was sent to Kaḥ-thog monastery by his teacher Zhig-po-gling-pa.[67] It was there that he met Stag-bla Padma-mati to whom he then bestowed the Kar-gling transmission.[68] The obscure title *Stag-bla* ("lama from Stag") in the names of these two important teachers subsequently became the name of their particular lineage.[69] We should note that Padma-mati is said to have received not only this transmission, but also that of the He-pa tradition initiated by A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan. Hence, in the person of this important Kaḥ-thog-pa master the two streams of the He-lugs and Stag-lugs converged.

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[66]Martin 1997, p. 93, no. 180. On the life of Ngag-gi-dbang-po, see GKCB, pp. 674-681.
[67]GKCB, p. 763-764; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 28.
[68]GLKT, pp. 83-84; B5, fol. 2b; DJTY, fol. 183-184.
[69]We must assume that Stag refers to either a place of origin or to the name of a family clan.

Stag-bla Padma-mati

According to 'Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan, Padma-mati composed a commentary on the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and a guidebook (*khrid-yig*) on the topic of the six bardos from that cycle.[70] Unfortunately, these texts have not yet been located. Several recensions of the Kar-gling collection, however, do contain works authored by him, although none of them can be identified as the texts referred to in the Kaḥ-thog history. In the existing collections, we find six of his works:

1. *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs nges-don rang-grol* [*Lineage Supplications called "Self-Liberation of the True Meaning"*]—written at the behest of a student named O-rgyan-blo-gros at Sku-lha-dkar-po hermitage (in Lho-rong ?);[71]
2. *Bla-ma rgyud-pa'i phyag-'tshal byin-rlabs phrin-phung* [*Heap of Messages of Salutation and Blessing to the Lineage Lamas*];[72]
3. *Bla-ma brgyud-rim-gyi bskang-ba 'brel tshe rang-grol* [*Self-Liberation of Life in connection with (Requests for) Expiation to the Series of Lineage Lamas*];[73]
4. *Zhi-khro'i bdag-bskyed mdor-bsdus dgongs-pa rang-grol* [*Digest of the Self-Generation of Peaceful and Wrathful Deities from "The Self-Liberated Wisdom-Mind"*];[74]
5. *Zhi-khro'i las-byang rtsar-phreng-gi sman-rag-gtor gsum-gyi skabs-su kha-'phang lhan-thabs* [*Explanatory Supplement to "The Garland of Principal*

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[70]GLKT, p. 84.
[71]B5; GK, fols. 27-32.
[72]GK, fols. 327-335; PY, fols. 219-228; T5; T8, vol. 1, fols. 283-290.
[73]GK, fols. 533-543.
[74]B3, fols. 27-29.

Practice Manuals Gathering the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities" to be used at the time of the Three-fold Offering of Medicine, Rakta, and Torma];[75]

6. *Tshe-'das gnas-'dren 'gro-drug rang-grol las nye-bar bsdus-pa sdug-bsngal rang-grol* [*Self-Liberation of Suffering which has been Fully Compiled from "The Self-Liberation of the Six Classes of Beings, Guiding the Deceased to a Higher State"*].[76]

We see from this list that Padma-mati must have perceived a need for clarifying certain rituals in the form of digests and short guidebooks, for he had composed at least two small works on the performance of the *Zhi-khro* rituals and a short anthology of liturgical teachings for the guidance of the dead—perhaps one of the earliest commentaries on such rituals in the history of the Kar-gling tradition. The three lineage prayers that he had written also seems to suggest his interest in communicating the historical validity of his specific tradition. We can assume that by the middle of the seventeenth century the *Zhi-khro* tradition preserved at Kaḥ-thog, and particularly by followers of the Stag-bla lineage, consisted not only of these supplemental manuals of Padma-mati, but also the standard bardo hymns of Karma-gling-pa, the basic texts of the *Zhi-khro* sādhana, and the ritual works of Rgya-ra-ba. Clearly, Padma-mati was a pivotal figure in the preservation and revision of the Kar-gling liturgy at Kaḥ-thog during this period. By introducing and incorporating his own texts to better accomodate the local needs of his community, Padma-mati was carrying on a long-standing tradition of ritual adaptation inaugurated almost a full century earlier by Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, the great systematizer of Karma-gling-pa's funeral liturgy.

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[75]GK, fols. 147-157.
[76]GK, fols. 971-1010.

We should point out the names of those teachers and students with whom Padma-mati came into close contact, since almost all of them had some influence on the diffusion of Karma-gling-pa's teachings in Tibet. Among his teachers we must mention the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje (1598-1669), Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol (1604-1669), and Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1608-1680). For our interests, his most notable pupil apart from Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje and Sna-tshogs-rang-grol—both with whom he shared a mutual teacher-student relationship—was a young Kun-bzang-shes-rab, the first abbot of the Dpal-yul monastery in Khams.[77] All of these figures stand prominent in a number of distinct Kar-gling transmission lineages to be discussed below, but we have no direct evidence suggesting their connections to the Kar-gling tradition transmitted through Padma-mati. We must stress, however, that contacts and exchanges between teachers and students were actually quite fluid in Tibet given the complexity of the interrelationships between the various traditions. In other words, the transmission of the Kar-gling teachings, and most teachings in general for that matter, were passed along lines moving in multiple directions, rather than strictly along a vertical axis defined by sectarian affiliation. Indeed, it is this very dynamic combined with a flexible textual arrangement that over the centuries has allowed for the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol's* widespread diffusion throughout Tibet and surrounding regions. Let us now survey another example of this network of tradition.

2. THE DPAL-YUL LINEAGE AND THE GNAS-MDO TRADITION OF KARMA-CHAGS-MED

Two divergent lineages of Karma-gling-pa's textual tradition converged to form the Dpal-yul tradition of Rig-'dzin Kun-bzang-shes-rab. These lineages are known as the "He-pa Tradition", which passed through the Kaḥ-thog disciples of A-rdo Dkon-mchog-

[77]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 55.

rgyal-mtshan, and the obscure Kaṃ-tshang Bka'-brgyud-pa affiliated "Gnas-mdo Tradition", which was first established by Rāgasya Karma-chags-med (1613-1678).[78] Kun-bzang-shes-rab received the former transmission from 'Khrul-zhig-chen-po Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan (also Ston-pa-rgyal-mtshan) of Rmug-bsangs, who was a student of Rgyal-thang-pa Ston-pa-seng-ge.[79] The Gnas-mdo transmission, on the other hand, was passed directly to him by Karma-chags-med, a figure closely linked in his early life to the Zur-mang monastery in Nang-chen (seat of the successive incarnations of Drung-pa Rin-po-che Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan).[80] In the paragraphs that follow we will review the details surrounding the origin of this unique and important composite tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*.

Kun-bzang-shes-rab

Kun-bzang-shes-rab was born in a place called A-'khyog which is said to be located in Bu-'bor in the region of Dpal-yul.[81] Among Kun-bzang-shes-rab's earliest and most influential teachers were Drung-pa Rin-po-che Chos-nyid-rgya-mtsho and 'Khrul-zhig Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan, both of whom were students of Kaḥ-thog-pa Dkon-mchog-seng-ge.[82] Kun-bzang-shes-rab studied for five years with Drung-pa Rin-po-che and received from him instructions on the practices of Mahāmudra.[83] From both this master and Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan, Kun-bzang-shes-rab received Rdzogs-chen

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[78]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 30.

[79]GLKT, pp. 79-80.

[80]T5; T8, vol. 2, fols. 1-3; Tsering Lama 1988; pp. 30 and 60. Oddly enough, according to the colophon of T5 this Gnas-mdo/Dpal-yul lineage list is said to have been originally composed by Bu-'bor Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho, third 'Chad-nyan-pa of Kaḥ-thog and teacher of He-pa-chos-'byung. This is but one of many examples of the interconnectedness of all the various Kar-gling traditions. On Zur-mang, see Roerich 1949, pp. 510-512; Trungpa 1971, chps. 2-3. Location found in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 10 (F21-22); Dorje 1996, pp. 535-537.

[81]GKCB, p. 759; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 54. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 10 (G23 and H24-25). According to Gyurme Dorje, Bu-'bor-sgang is located in Li-thang-rdzong, cf. Dorje 1996, p. 496.

[82]GKCB, p. 752. Dkon-mchog-seng-ge was a student of Rgyal-thang-pa Ston-pa-seng-ge. See GLKT, pp. 80 and 83.

[83]GKCB, p. 760; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 55.

teachings of the ***bka'-ma*** and ***gter-ma*** lineages. Presumably, it was around this time, when still a young boy, that he briefly met Stag-bla Padma-mati.[84] Although there is no indication that he received the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* teachings from Padma-mati, he did eventually receive other transmissions of the Stag-bla tradition from Rgya-rong Sog-mo Rin-chen-rdo-rje[85] and from Padma-mati's disciple, Dkon-mchog-bkra-shis.[86]

The first person to actually transmit the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* to Kun-bzang-shes-rab was Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan at his monastery in Rmug-bsangs.[87] Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan had received this transmission from his peer A-gro-ba Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, a fellow student of Rgyal-thang-pa Ston-pa-seng-ge.[88] The specific details of the exchange between Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan and Kun-bzang-shes-rab are not elucidated, although we do know that Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan held the Kaḥ-thog-pa lineage of A-rdo Dkon-mchog-rgyal-mtshan's most important teachings—those related to the *Kun-tu-bzang-po'i dgongs-pa zang(s)-thal*.[89] Thus, it is certain that the particular Kar-gling tradition that he passed to Kun-bzang-shes-rab was that of the He-pa tradition, and indeed this is attested to in the transmission records preserved at Dpal-yul.[90] It was specifically the He-lugs transmission that Kun-bzang-shes-rab brought with him from Rmug-bsangs when he assumed the abbatial seat of Dpal-yul monastery in 1665.

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[84]GKCB, p. 760; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 55.

[85]Rgya-rong-pa Rin-chen-rdo-rje was a student of Bu-'bor Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho, cf. GLKT, p. 79. On Sog-rdzong in Rgya-rong, see Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 10 (G-H26-27); Dorje 1996, p. 454-455.

[86]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 56.

[87]The precise location of Rmug-(b)sang is not specified in the available sources. It is apparently near the region of Dpal-yul, perhaps northwest of that area. See Tsering Lama 1988, p. 54; Dorje 1996, p. 516. It was also in this region that Kun-bzang-shes-rab received the *Gnam-chos* transmission directly from Gter-ston Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje (1645-1667), cf. GKCB, p. 628; Tsering Lama, p. 62; Bradburn 1995, p. 269

[88]Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje is indicated as having received the Kar-gling transmission from Bu-'bor Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho. GK; PY, fols. 33-38; cf. also GLKT, p. 80.

[89]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 57.

[90]GK; PY, fols. 33-38; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 30.

In that year the king of Sde-dge, Byams-pa-phun-tshogs (d.1667), with the help of Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa (the third abbot of Lung-grub-steng), had sponsored the construction of a monastic complex in Dpal-yul at an auspicious location known as Rnam-rgyal-rtse. The site had been chosen based on positive geomantic calculations (*sa-dpyad*).[91] According to the diviners (*tho-btsun*), this place was to be called Dpal-yul Nam-rgyal-byang-chub-gling. Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan had subsequently been invited from Rmug-bsangs to be the new monastery's first abbot, but he had graciously declined. His claim was that he was unfit for the job because of old age and his ascetic lifestyle.[92] As an alternative, Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan recommended Kun-bzang-shes-rab, who was then traveling in Rmug-bsangs with the young *gter-ston* Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje (1645-1667), revealer of the *Gnam-chos* [*Celestial Doctrine*] treasures.[93] After conferring with Gser-lo Bstan-pa-rgyal-mtshan and Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje, Kun-bzang-shes-rab accepted the appointment and arrived at Dpal-yul shortly thereafter. At the monastery, he established the requisite rules and regulations as well as the standard Buddhist exoteric and esoteric ecclessiastic disciplines.[94] Consequently, he is renowned as the founder of the monastic tradition of Dpal-yul.

Not long after assuming his role as abbot, Kun-bzang-shes-rab traveled again to the retreat center of Gnas-mdo in the region of Ngom-yul[95] where he had earlier received the vows of novitiate (Skt., *śramaṇera*) from his teacher Karma-chags-med.[96] Once there, he requested to be fully ordained as a Buddhist monk. He was then presented with a number

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[91]GKCB, p. 761. On Byams-pa-phun-tshogs, Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa, and the abbatial succession of Sde-dge Lung-grub-steng monastery see Kolmaś 1968 and 1988.
[92]GKCB, p. 761; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 59.
[93]On whom see GKCB, pp. 624-629; Bradburn 1995, pp. 268-269.
[94]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 60.
[95]GKCB, pp. 629 and 760. Most likely, Ngom-yul refers to the Ngom-chu valley north of Chab-mdo near the lower reaches of 'Bri-zla Zal-mo-sgang. See Tsering Lama 1988, p. 35; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, maps 7 (F-G20-21) and 10 (F-G23); Dorje 1996, p. 470.
[96]GKCB, p. 760; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 58.

of significant *gter-ma* transmissions, which included some of the revelations of Rig-'dzin Rgod-ldem-can, Ratna-gling-pa, Padma-gling-pa (1450-1521), 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po (1585-1656), and, most importantly for our interests, Karma-gling-pa.[97] In particular with respect to the latter, Karma-chags-med transmitted to Kun-bzang-shes-rab the generation and completion phase *sādhanas* of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*.[98]

We do not know the actual content of the Kar-gling transmissions presented to Kun-bzang-shes-rab, but presumably these would have included the core texts of Karma-gling-pa, Nyi-zla-'od-zer, and Rgya-ra-ba, with the addition of supplemental works composed by Karma-chags-med himself. It is also possible given Karma-chags-med's close connection to Zur-mang monastery that he would have been in possession of that tradition's special *Bar-do thos-grol* instructions reaching back to the nebulous lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po (see discussion below). This would have meant that Kun-bzang-shes-rab received from Karma-chags-med not only the major works of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, but also the distinctive texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*—including perhaps the famous *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*. Whatever the case, the exchange between these two was momentous in that it represented a convergence of at least two traditions of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* tradition—the Gnas-mdo and He-pa traditions, respectively. Once it was passed to Kun-bzang-shes-rab, this combined transmission was maintained by the principal lineage-holders of Dpal-yul monastery. Outside of Dpal-yul, however, there were two "pure" Gnas-mdo transmissions that passed only through the chief disciples of Karma-chags-med.

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[97]GKCB, p. 761; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 60.
[98]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 60.

Rāgasya Karma-chags-med

Rāgasya Karma-chags-med was born in 1613 in the region of Ngom-yul as the son of the Anu-yoga siddha Padma-dbang-drag. Like Karma-gling-pa before him, he had been prophecied as being an incarnation of the eighth century translator Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan.[99] As a young boy, known then as Dbang-drag-gsungs, his father taught him the threefold rites of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition—the rituals of recitation (*bsnyen*), accomplishment (*sgrub*), and service (*las*).[100] In addition, his father also bestowed upon him certain long-life practices (*tshe-sgrub*) from the *gter-ma* revelations of Ratna-gling-pa.[101] At nineteen, in the presence of the fourth Drung-pa Rin-po-che Kun-dga'-rnam-rgyal of Zur-mang monastery he took layman's vows (Skt., *upāsaka*) and received the name Karma-bsam-'grub.[102] That same year he traveled to Mtshur-phu monastery, seat of the Karma-pa incarnations, and took the vows of novitiate under the sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa Chos-kyi-dbang-phyug (1584-1635). Soon afterwards he received full ordination and the name Karma-chags-med.[103]

At some point, possibly just before his death, Padma-dbang-drag presented his son Karma-chags-med with the complete cycle of teachings of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. We do not know the circumstances surrounding this transmission, other than the

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[99]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 36; Bradburn 1995, p. 248. In speaking with various Rnying-ma-pa lamas in India, I found much to my frustration that these two figures—Karma-gling-pa and Karma-chags-med—were often conflated with one another, so that when Karma-gling-pa's name was mentioned Karma-chags-med was thought to be the referent, and vice versa. Needless to say, this created a few problems when discussing either one of them individually.

[100]GKCB, p. 629; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, vol. 2, pp. 114-115.

[101]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 36.

[102]GKCB, p. 629; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 38. It is certainly possible that Drung-pa Rin-po-che also bestowed the *Bar-do thos-grol* upon Karma-chags-med at this time, since the former was a specific holder of its distinctive Zur-mang lineage. As ample evidence in the biographical sources indicate, it was not uncommon for students to receive the Kar-gling transmissions at a young age or at the time of their ordination.

[103]Incidentally, it was on the occassion of the sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa's death that Karma-chags-med first offered in dedication one of his fingers as a burning "butter-lamp", giving rise to the popular legend of his intense and unfailing devotion. The story is recounted in GKCB, pp. 629-630; Tsering Lama 1988, p. 39.

fact that Karma-chags-med did indeed receive the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* from his father. According to the available lineage lists, Padma-dbang-drag had received these teachings from one Gar-dbang Kun-dga'-bstan-'dzin, who in turn had received them from Rig-'dzin Kun-dga'-grags-pa.[104] Unfortunately, the history of Padma-dbang-drag's lineage remains shrouded in mystery since the identities of these earlier figures have yet to be established. One suggestion that seems to ring true, however, is that these individuals were all closely linked to the Kaṃ-tshang Bka'-brgyud affiliated Zur-mang tradition, established sometime in the fifteenth century by Rma-se-rtogs-ldan of the Mi-nyag clan[105]—the very same family from which Karma-guru had also descended. In this light, it may turn out that the earliest figures in this lineage were actually important disciples of Rma-se-rtogs-ldan, such as 'Od-zer-bzang-po, who founded the monastery of Chu-gsol in lower Ldan[-khog].[106] Could 'Od-zer-bzang-po have actually been Rgya-ra-ba's student Thugs-rje-'od-zer? Whatever the case, it is clear that the Zur-mang tradition can be traced back to a very early stage in the history of the transmissions of the Kar-gling tradition and particularly to the specific lineage associated with the *Bar-do thos-grol*.[107] Karma-chags-med's connection at such a young age to Zur-mang through its supreme abbot the fourth Drung-pa Rin-po-che may have had a profound influence on his own adaptations of the *Zhi-khro* tradition.

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[104]This is possibly the *thugs-sras* of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol. However, in the lineal series in which the *thugs-sras* Kun-dga'-grags-pa appears, his teacher is indicated as 'Khrul-zhig Buddhamaṅga [=Sangs-rgyas-bkra-shis], disciple of an obscure student of Rgya-ra-ba named Sprul-sku Thugs-rje-'od-zer. See the lineages listed in GKCB, p. 698; B2, fols. 15-16; CH; DJTY, fols. 181-184; DLSY, fols. 90-91; TLSY, fols. 390-391; cf. also DJTY, fols. 181-184; RCKC, fols. 69-70. 'Khrul-zhig Buddhamaṅga is also mentioned in connection with the Kaḥ-thog lineage of the Kar-gling tradition in B3, fol. 63. There we learn that from Sangs-rgyas-bkra-shis the lineage spread to Sprul-sku Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho and He-pa-chos-'byung.

[105]Brief biographical details of this figure can be found in LRCB, p. 305.

[106]Roerich 1949, p. 511. Ldan-khog near Sde-dge was the birthplace of Dil-mgo-mkhyen-brtse Rin-po-che (1910-1991), cf. Wylie 1962, pp. 104 and 187; Dorje 1996, p. 527.

[107]For references on Zur-mang, see note 39 above. According to 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul (B3, fol. 63), the Zur-mang tradition of the Kar-gling transmission originated from one Dgongs-'dus-pa Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, a student of Ratna-gling-pa. From him the lineage was passed to Bya-btang Blo-gros-rgya-mtsho and eventually reached the fourth Drung-pa Kun-dga'-rnam-rgyal. According to the lineage included in S3, Dgongs-'dus-pa (alias A-po-chos-rje) had received the transmission from the nebulous Mgon-po-rdo-rje.

These apparent Zur-mang connections in the context of the Kar-gling Gnas-mdo tradition may explain the unsubstantiated claim of the famous Chos-rgyam Drung-pa (Chögyam Trungpa, 1939-1987), the eleventh Drung-pa Rin-po-che of Zur-mang, that all of Karma-gling-pa's students were actually Bka'-brgyud even though he himself was a follower of the Rnying-ma-pa tradition.[108] A similar idea, also without supportive evidence, is found in a recent article by Antonella Crescenzi and Fabrizio Torricelli, where Karma-gling-pa is indicated as having converted in his later life from the Rnying-ma sect to that of the Bka'-brgyud-pa.[109] Apart from the Kaṃ-tshang affiliations of Karma-chags-med's lineage, the position held by Trungpa *et al* is not explicitly supported in the available written sources. However, there is amble evidence of strong Bka'-brgyud associations of many of the most active promoters of Karma-gling-pa's textual tradition. Leading figures in both the Dpa'-bo and Zhwa-dmar-pa subsects of the Karma Kaṃ-tshang, for example, played important roles as teachers of some of the key Kar-gling lineage holders,[110] and as patrons supported some of the tradition's most significant monastic institutions.[111]

By the end of Karma-chags-med's life, he had contributed at least seven major literary works pertaining to the teachings of Karma-gling-pa. One such work—a commentary on a section of the *Bar-do khrid-yig* entitled *Chos-nyid bar-do'i khrid-yig mthong-ba rang-grol-gyi ngo-sprod car-phog khyer-ba deb-zhig* [*Book Yielding an Immediate Direct Introduction to "The Self-Liberated Vision: Guidebook to the Intermediate State of*

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[108]Fremantle and Trungpa 1975, p. ix.
[109]Crescenzi and Torricelli 1997, p. 73.
[110]We might cite, for instance, the student-teacher relations of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas and the second Zhwa-dmar-pa Mkha'-spyod-dbang-po, Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba and the fourth Zhwa-dmar-pa Spyan-snga Chos-grags-pa, Mdo-sngags-bstan-'dzin and the fifth Zhwa-dmar-pa Dkon-mchog-yan-lag-'bangs, Gong-ra Lo-chen and the sixth Zhwa-dmar-pa Gar-dbang-chos-kyi-dbang-phyug, and finally Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol and the third Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag-rgya-mtsho.
[111]The monasteries of Dwags-po Rtse-le and Kong-po Thang-'brog immediately come to mind. Both institutions were supported financially by the second Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag-'phreng-ba, with close ties also to the fourth Zhwa-dmar-pa Spyan-snga Chos-grags-pa and the eighth Karma-pa Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje. See discussion below.

Reality"]—was included by 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul as a central text in the Kar-gling section of his *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*.[112] Oddly enough, this is the only text we find in that section devoted to the essential topic of the *chos-nyid bar-do*—a peculiarity that could only be explained by the fact that Karma-chags-med's Gnas-mdo tradition appears to have been the primary tradition inherited by 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul.[113]

Among Karma-chags-med's other more notable works included in the relevant Kar-gling collections, we should mention his redactions and original commentaries on the liturgical practices of the so-called "guidance" (*gnas-'dren*) and "dredging the depths of hell" (*na-rag dong-sprugs*) rituals. As we saw in Chapter 2, the *gnas-'dren* ceremony, designed to guide the deceased to a favorable destiny, stands out as being especially significant in the funeral rites of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* liturgy. I am aware of two works of this sort attributed to Karma-chags-med in the various recensions of the Kar-gling cycle:

1. *Na-rag bskang-bshags nyams-chag rang-grol-gyi cha-lag tshe-'das 'gro-drug rang-grol-gyi zin-bris* [*Memorandum on "The Self-Liberation of the Six Classes of Beings, Guiding the Deceased to a Higher State: An Auxiliary Practice of 'The Self-Liberation of Broken Vows through Expiation and Confession in Hell'"*]—requested by one Dbon-po-rgyal-mtshan and composed in the wood-snake year 1665;[114]
2. *Tshe-'das gnas-'dren bsdus-pa thugs-rje'i lcags-kyu* [*Iron-Hook of Compassion: A Digest of "Guiding the Deceased to a Higher State"*]—

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[112]B3, fols. 147-187.
[113]See RCKC, fols. 69-70; DJTY, fols. 181-184.
[114]Also known as *Gnas-'dren 'gro-drug rang-grol khrigs-su bkod-pa*. See GK, fols. 849-939; PY, fols. 585-685; T5; T8, vol. 1, ff 391-471.

which appears to be a redaction of an earlier work no longer extant entitled Tshe-'das gnas-'dren 'gro-drug rang-grol (see Chapter 2).[115]

Much like the *gnas-'dren* practices, the *dong-sprugs* liturgy is closely linked to the broader category of ritual referred to as *bskang-bshags*, or "confession and expiation". Ostensibly, the overall goal of the *dong-sprugs* rite is to first acknowledge and then atone for all of one's faults and broken vows, and having done so, to then attempt to erase the transgressions of others who may be unable to do so themselves—like those innumerable beings suffering in the three lower realms. The process is likened to pulling something up from its root (*rtsa-ba nas 'don-pa*) or more colorfully, churning the very depths of hell (*na-rak dong-sprugs*).[116] The *dong-sprugs* works of Karma-chags-med may represent his most original contributions to the literary tradition of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, the significance of which is confirmed by the fact that the distinctive Kar-gling tradition associated with him is known alternatively as the *Dong-sprugs-lugs*, or "Dredging the Depths Tradition".[117] The two extant works of this system written by Karma-chags-med are:

1. *Karma-gling-pa'i na-rag dong-sprugs lugs-kyi mtshams-sbyor* [*Connecting Links in the Ritual of the Tradition of Karma-gling-pa's "Dredging the Depths of Hell"*];[118]

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[115]Also known as *Tshe-'das gnas-'dren bsdus-pa*. See PY, fols. 553-583, S3; T5.

[116]The earliest texts of this type known to me are the two works belonging to the *Bka'-brgyad* revelations of Guru Chos-dbang (1212-1270)—the *Bka'-brgyad drag-po rang-byung rang-shar las byung-ba'i zhi-khro na-rag skong-bshags-kyi cho-ga*, and the *'Khor-ba dong-sprug*. See RCTD, vol. 23, nos. 24-27 and vol. 66, no. 28, respectively. It is not clear whether the latter text is actually Guru Chos-dbang's *'Khor-ba dong-sprug*. Since the nineteenth century, however, the work most commonly used for this *dong-sprugs* practice is 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul's *Nyams-chag sdig-sgrib thams-cad bshags-pa'i rgyal-po na-rag dong-sprugs*, which is based on the aforementioned texts of Guru Chos-dbang. See CPYR, pp. 371-387. A partial translation is found in Dowman 1994, pp. 53-61.

[117]Tsering Lama 1988, p. 30.

[118]GK, fols. 297-304.

2. *Zhi-khro thugs-kyi na-rak don-sprugs cho-ga'i zin-bris las khol-du phyung-ba* [*Selection from the Memorandum on the Ritual of Dreging the Depths of Hell of the Exalted Mind of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*].[119]

Karma-chags-med's textual contributions and addenda to Rgya-ra-ba's liturgy express a greater emphasis on the restoration of broken vows and the atonement of sins. It appears from the existing textual evidence that his contributions to the tradition were made effective through a series of ritual actions intended to purify the sins of the departed, and thereby end the postmortem sufferings caused by past transgressions. The disciple lineage of these and other related Kar-gling transmissions of the Gnas-mdo tradition were passed through two main channels, the lower "Eastern" Lineage (*smad-brgyud*) of Gsang-phu Padma-kun-dga' and the upper "Western" Lineage (*stod-brgyud*) of Brtson-grus-rgya-mtsho.[120] Appropriately, both traditions were transmitted to 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul and propagated by the leaders of the ecumenical Ris-med movement in eastern Tibet during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[121]

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[119]GK, fols. 371-382.

[120]With regard to the meaning of the terms *stod* and *smad* in relation to lineage, Gene Smith clearly explained the distinction to me as follows (e-mail communication of December 7, 1998; cf. also Smith 1970, p. 55, notes 3-4): "The terms *Stod-brgyud* or *Stod lugs* and *Smad-brgyud* or *Smad lugs* most generally refer to the spatial dimension. The best known examples are the transmissions of the vinaya and the divisions within the 'Brug-pa Dkar-brgyud-pa tradition. The *stod lugs* of the vinaya refers to the transmission of the vinaya that came from Kashmir in the 8th and 9th century. The *smad lugs* transmission developed when the ordination lineage had to be reconstructed in eastern Tibet after the damage done by Glang Dar-ma.... In short the axis runs from southwest to northeast. The southwest is upper [*stod*] and the farther you go to the northeast the more you become *smad*."

[121]On the Ris-med movement, see Smith 1970; Blondeau 1985, pp. 153-157; Karmay 1988a, pp. 35-37.

3. THE KAR-GLING TRANSMISSIONS OF THE FIFTH DALAI LAMA

The historical preoccupation of the Tibetan religious schools with so-called "spiritual genealogy"[122] is most clearly represented in the literary genre known as *gsan-yig*, "record of (teachings) received", or *thob-yig*, "record of (teachings) obtained", i.e., accession list. These texts generally contain meticulous lists of manuscripts, initiations, and transmissions obtained by an individual. In addition, they record the complete series of disciples to whom the teachings had previously been transmitted, and thus they provide essential information for scholars interested in scriptural and biographical history. Regrettably, despite the obvious historical significance of such genealogical records for better understanding the transmission of religious disciplines and doctrines in Tibet, few scholars have paid close attention to this literature. One of the most substantial works of this genre is the *gsan-yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama.[123] In the present context, this work is noteworthy for two reasons. First, the text gives an extensive list of titles and names of authors for works belonging to the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.[124] This list of titles is important because it indicates what texts existed and were available by the time of the fifth Dalai Lama's writing of his record (between the years 1665-1670). Furthermore, this section also allows us to begin to establish the works authored by Karma-gling-pa himself by sorting out those works penned by others whose names are often not identified in the colophons. Secondly, this work endeavors to establish a more or less complete succession of teachers involved in the transmission of the Kar-gling *Zhi-*

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[122]A term borrowed from Franz-Karl Ehrhard, which he explains as follows: "I have chosen this term in order to stress that genealogies in a genre like the *thob-yig* (and to a certain extent also in the so-called *rus-yig*) must be read with an eye to the transmission of spiritual techniques and teachings". Ehrhard 1993, p. 80.

[123]DLSY, vols. 1-4. Other *gsan-yig* of note are those of Gnyos-ston Dpal-ldan-bzang-po (1447-1507), Blo-bzang-'phrin-las (b.1642), Gter-bdag-gling-pa (1646-1714, TLSY), Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul I Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (1708-1736, ZDTY), Khams-sprul VI Bstan-pa'i-nyi-ma (1849-1907), and Bdud-'joms-'jigs-bral-ye-shes-rdo-rje (1904-1987, DJTY). See bibliography for full citations.

[124]DLSY, vol. 4, fols. 86.6-90.5.

khro,[125] beginning with its first "author" (Padmasambhava), leading to its "revealer" (Karma-gling-pa), and ending with the composer of the transmission list itself (the fifth Dalai Lama). It is important to bear in mind, however, that this lineal succession represents only the particular teaching tradition inherited by the Great Fifth.

'Od-gsal-klong-yangs

This Kar-gling tradition was actually formed by the convergence of two separate lineages originating with Karma-gling-pa's grand-disciple, Nyi-zla-'od-zer. The first lineage was passed from that teacher to a certain lama Sangs-rgyas-dri-med, who has not yet been identified. Sangs-rgyas-dri-med then transmitted the teachings to one Bkra-shis-bzang-po, who in turn passed them to 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs. This latter figure is known in a lineage described by Guru Bkra-shis in reference to the Snying-thig system of Klong-chen-pa.[126] Here, we learn that 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs was born at Skyed-spug in Rgyas[l]-sman (near 'Phyong-rgyas in southern Tibet?) as the son of Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, abbot of Dung-dgon.[127] He studied with a number of famous masters of the fifteenth century, such as Thang-stong-rgyal-po, Padma-gling-pa, and Rdzogs-chen Kun-dga'-bkra-shis (=Bkra-shis-bzang-po?), but his two most important teachers were both his father, Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje, and the second 'Brug-pa Rgyal-dbang-rje (alias Kun-dga'-dpal-'byor, 1428-1476), who we may recall was also a teacher of Rgya-ra-ba. 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs later founded the retreat centers of Zangs-mtsho and 'Od-gsal-gling, where he established a tradition of meditation combining both systems of Mahāmudra and Rdzogs-chen.[128] He died at the age of eighty leaving behind a teaching legacy that spread

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[125]DLSY, vol. 4, fols. 90.5-91.3.
[126]GKCB, pp. 214-240, esp. p. 225.
[127]This Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje may be the one mentioned as the teacher of Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgya-mtsho. On the township of Rgyal-sman, see Dorje 1996, p. 270.
[128]GKCB, p. 225.

throughout Dbus, Gtsang, Dwags-po, and Kong-po. Among his many students, two deserve special mention. They are Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen and Snang-gsal-ba Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho. The former, we shall soon see, played an active role in the transmission of the *Bar-do thos-grol* lineage that eventually reached Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1608-1680), while the latter held the two Kar-gling lineages that reached the fifth Dalai Lama.

Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub

The second Kar-gling transmission flowing into the tradition of the fifth Dalai Lama passed first through Nyi-zla-'od-zer, then Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, and then to one named Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub. This name appears in many transmission lists, but who it precisely refers to is a riddle not easily solved. To search for clues, we must first return to the Kaḥ-thog transmissions and focus on an obscure lineage emanating from Rgya-ra-ba. This is listed in Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che's *Rin-chen gter-mdzod-kyi thob-yig* [*Accession Record of the Precious Anthology of Treasures*]. Here, Rgya-ra-ba is indicated as having transmitted the complete Kar-gling initiations and reading-transmissions to a certain Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba (known also by two other names, Las-'phro-gling-pa and Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan-dpal-bzang-po).[129] We are already familiar with this individual from our brief discussion of 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs. Recall that both figures were each student and teacher to the other. Born in the fire-serpent year 1497 in Rgya-ma,[130] north of Lhasa near 'Bri-gung, Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba took monastic vows with the fourth Zhwa-dmar Spyan-snga Chos-grags-pa (1453-1524) and received the name Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan.[131] He was later appointed abbot

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[129]DJTY, fol. 184.
[130]Birthplace of the Emperor Srong-btsan-sgam-po (c.609-650) and one of the thirteen original myriachies. See Wylie 1962, p. 129n.124; cf. also Dorje 1996, p. 210.
[131]GKCB, p. 238; ZCGT, p. 181.

(*gdan-sa*) of Nyi-lde and took over the duties of the religious institute (*chos-sde*) of Lhun-grub, formerly administered by lama Sor-'brang-pa Gzhon-nu-tshe-dbang.[132] Towards the end of his life, he also became the abbot of Gnas-nang and Yangs-pa-can, the two main strongholds of the Zhwa-dmar-pa sect.[133]

From Grub-chen Kun-bzang-rdo-rje, a disciple of Rgyal-sras Zla-ba-grags-pa, Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan received many Rdzogs-chen transmissions, such as the *Snying-thig ya-bzhi* [*Fourfold Seminal Heart*].[134] Among his many contemporaries with whom he exchanged various teachings, the most notable were Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen, Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, and, of course, 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs. Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen was an influential teacher at Rtse-le Gsar-pa monastery in Dwags-po, after having been invited by its founder Rig-'dzin-chen-po Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal.[135] During his administration, Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal invited several other prominent religious figures to Rtse-le, such as Rgyal-sras Zla-ba-grags-pa, Sgam-po-pa Nam-mkha'-guru, and a *gter-ston* known as Las-'phro-gling-pa.[136]

Who exactly was Las-'phro-gling-pa? In the Tibetan biographical record we find four distinct *gter-ston* with this name, each from a different historical period. They are: (1) Sngag-'chang Las-'phro-gling-pa of Do-la, disciple of Rdo-rje-gling-pa (1346-1405),[137] (2) 'Gro-'dul Las-'phro-gling-pa of Gnyal, disciple of Padma-gling-pa,[138] (3) Mi-'gyur

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[132]GKCB, p. 238-239; ZCGT, p. 181. These institutions have not yet been identified, although Lhun-grub Chos-sde was probably located in Lhun-grub-rdzong west of Rgya-ma. See Dorje 1996, pp. 206-209.

[133]Gnas-nang was founded in 1333 by the first Zhwa-dmar-pa Rtogs-ldan Grags-pa-seng-ge and became the seat of the successive incarnations of the first Dpa'-bo-gtsug-lag Chos-dbang-lhun-grub (1440-1503). Yangs-pa-can was founded in 1490 on the advice of the fourth Zhwa-dmar-pa and was the main residence of the subsequent Zhwa-dmar incarnations. See GKCB, pp. 961-962; Wylie 1962, pp. 78 and 150; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, map 5 (H15); Dorje 1996, pp. 193-199.

[134]GKCB, p. 239; ZCGT, pp. 178-181.

[135]TSLG, fols. 317-318. Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal was a disciple of both the fourth Zhwa-dmar-pa and the second Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag-phreng-ba (1504-1566).

[136]TSLG, fol. 317.

[137]GKCB, p. 460-461; Bradburn 1995, pp. 191-192.

[138]GKCB, p. 461-463; Bradburn 1995, pp. 192-193.

Las-'phro-gling-pa of Rgya-ma,[139] and (4) Gar-dbang Las-'phro-gling-pa of E-yul, a sixteenth century mystic belonging to the "nephew-lineage" (*dbon-brgyud*) of Ratna-gling-pa.[140] From this list the two most likely candidates for the Las-'phro-gling-pa who visited Rtse-le monastery are (2) 'Gro-'dul-ba of Gnyal and (3) Mi-'gyur-ba of Rgya-ma. Since Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen was a noted friend and contemporary of the latter, and because both of them are mentioned explicitly in reference to the monastery of Rtse-le Gsar-pa, I tend to think that Las-'phro-gling-pa in this context actually refers to Mi-'gyur-ba. The matter is not so confused in the case of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, who is clearly linked to Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba.[141] The point of all of this is to verify the fact that Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba Kun-dga'-dpal-bzang-po was the teacher of both Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen and Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, and also that he had established connections with Rtse-le Rigs-'dzin-chen-po Bsod-nams-mam-rgyal.[142] The reason this detail is so important is that in the lineages associated with the Kar-gling *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* and the apparently related *Bar-do thos-grol* all of these names appear in connection with one another. By clearly establishing the relationships between them, we are in a better position to identify the mysterious person named Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub.

The lineages of the *Dbang-bzhi* and *Thos-grol* transmissions flow exclusively through either Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen or Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol. Both of these transmissions come from a single teacher, referred to simply as Grub-chen or Mkhas-grub Kun-dga'-lhun-grub.[143] In the *gsan-yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama, as we

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[139]GKCB, pp. 238-239 and 463; ZCGT, pp. 181-182; Bradburn 1995, p. 210.
[140]GKCB, p. 464; Bradburn 1995, pp. 226-227.
[141]GKCB, p. 239; ZCGT, p. 181
[142]We must point out, as well, that apart from Rin-chen-phun-tshogs another of Kun-dga'-dpal-bzang-po's chief students was Snang-gsal-ba Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho, who we have learned was also a student of 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs. See GKCB, p. 463.
[143]See B1; B2, fol. 15-16; B4; DH; T3;

have noted, the second transmission lineage given for the text cycle *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* lists the name Kun-dga'-lhun-grub as the pupil of Rgya-ra-ba. The Kun-dga'-lhun-grub of this series is indicated as having transmitted the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* to Snang-gsal-ba Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho. From Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho the teachings were passed to Kun-dga'-tshe-mchog, and then to Ngag-dbang-ye-shes-grub-pa. This very same lineage is found in the *Chos-'byung* of Guru Bkra-shis in the section on Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba. Here, we see clearly that Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba transmitted his own scriptural revelations to both 'Bri-gung Rin-chen-phun-tshogs and Snang-gsal-ba Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho.[144] In light of the evidence above, and considering also that Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba was known to have received the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* transmission directly from Rgya-ra-ba, I am inclined to argue that the Kun-dga'-lhun-grub found in the lineages of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, Bsod-nams-rin-chen, and the fifth Dalai Lama was actually Kun-dga'-dpal-bzang-po, alias Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba. We will have reason to return to this issue when we examine more carefully the *Bar-do thos-grol* traditions of Gter-bdag-gling-pa and Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa.

To summarize thus far, the fifth Dalai Lama received two distinct Kar-gling transmissions, one which passed from Bkra-shis-bzang-po to 'Od-gsal-klong-yangs and another from Rgya-ra-ba to Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub, a.k.a. Rgya-ma Kun-dga'-dpal-bzang-po. Both streams converged in the person of Snang-gsal-ba Bkra-shis-rgya-mtsho. This individual passed the teachings to Snang-gsal-ba Kun-dga'-tshe-mchog, who in turn transmitted them to Ngag-dbang-ye-shes-grub-pa. It was this master who bestowed the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* upon Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol, from whom it then reached the fifth Dalai Lama.[145]

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[144]GKCB, p. 463.
[145]GKCB, p. 300.

Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol

Briefly, Chos-dbyings-rang-grol was born in 1604 into the great House of Zur, one of Tibet's most renowned families,[146] as the son of Gzhon-nu-don-'grub, an emanation of Rig-'dzin Kumārādza (1266-1343). At nine, he met Rig-'dzin Ngag-gi-dbang-po, son of Karma-guru, who prophecied that he would accomplish much benefit in transmitting the teachings of the "Old Translation" (*snga-'gyur*) school, the Rnying-ma-pa.[147] When still a young man, sometime around 1615, he went before Ngag-dbang-ye-shes-grub-pa and received the complete initiations, reading-transmission, and experiential instructions for Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. During this ceremony, he was given the "secret name" (*gsang-mtshan*) Chos-dbyings-rang-grol.[148] At some point later in life, he met Stag-bla Padma-mati when the latter was traveling through Lhasa, and each bestowed teachings upon the other. From Padma-mati, Chos-dbyings-rang-grol received volumes of the *Dgongs-'dus*, as well as doctrines and practices pertaining to the *Bka'-brgyad*, and in return he presented the Kaḥ-thog-pa lama with commentaries on the *Gsang-ba'i snying-po*, such as the *Phyogs-bcu mun-sel* [*Dispelling the Darkness in the Ten Directions*] of Klong-chen-pa.[149] We have no indication that these exchanges between Chos-dbyings-rang-grol and Padma-mati included materials from Karma-gling-pa's text cycle, even though by this time both individuals had been established as leading promoters of the tradition. We do know, however, that around the time Padma-mati was visiting Lhasa, the fifth Dalai Lama accepted Chos-dbyings-rang-grol as his Rnying-ma-pa teacher.[150] We can only assume that soon thereafter the composite Kar-gling tradition

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[146]On the Zur family, see especially Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 617-649.
[147]GKCB, p. 300; ZCGT, p. 242.
[148]GKCB, p. 300; ZCGT, p. 242. This is another example of the practice of bestowing the Kar-gling transmission upon teenage boys at the time of their ordination.
[149]GKCB, p. 302. On the *Phyogs-bcu mun-sel*, see Dorje 1987. Padma-mati would later pass these teachings on to the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje.
[150]GKCB, p. 302.

inherited by Zur-chen was transmitted to this high-profile student. As far as we know, Chos-dbyings-rang-grol's particular *Zhi-khro* transmission remained with the fifth Dalai Lama and was not spread further. However, the fifth Dalai Lama did become the teacher of two important Kar-gling lineage-holders—the fourth Pad-gling Thugs-sras Bstan-'dzin-'gyur-med-rdo-rje (b.1641), and Gter-bdag-gling-pa, founder of the monastery of O-rgyan Smin-grol-gling in central Tibet.[151] It is to this tradition that we now turn our attention.

4. GTER-BDAG-GLING-PA AND THE LINEAGES OF THE SMIN-GROL-GLING TRADITION

The monastery of O-rgyan Smin-grol-gling, the most important Rnying-ma-pa institution in central Tibet during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, was first established in the fire-dragon year 1676 by Gter-bdag-gling-pa (alias Padma-gar-dbang-'gyur-med-rdo-rje).[152] This pivotal figure, "king of treasure-revealers" (*gter-ston chos-kyi-rgyal-po*), was an extraordinarily influential teacher and prolific author whose legacy practically defined the age in which he lived—a period of cultural renaissance and creative expansion of the Rnying-ma-pa throughout central and eastern Tibet. At its height, Smin-grol-gling boasted four hundred monks and three monastic households (*bla-brang*).[153] The success of this ecclessiastic institution was in part due to the powerful connections Gter-bdag-gling-pa and his eminent lineage of descendants cultivated with the leaders of central Tibet,[154] and particularly the fifth Dalai Lama, who shared a close

[151]We should note with some interest that the "last rites" for the Great Fifth were performed in the Potala by Gter-bdag-gling-pa on the twenty-fourth day of the eighth month of 1681. See Karmay 1988b, p. 21. We can only presume that at least some of these rites were drawn from the funerary texts of Karma-gling-pa's tradition.
[152]GKCB, p. 705.
[153]Smith 1970, p. 7.
[154]In the words of E. Gene Smith: "Smin-grol-gling was highly esteemed for the cultivation of learning, especially the literary arts, that went on there. It provided the poetry teachers to the school for

master-cum-disciple relationship with him. In terms of the works attributed to Gter-bdag-gling-pa, his *gter-ma* revelations came to be known collectively as the *Lho-gter*, or "Southern Treasures"[155] and comprised the essential body of instruction followed at Smin-grol-gling. Like the fifth Dalai Lama, Gter-bdag-gling-pa also left behind an exhaustive record of all the manuscripts, initiations, and transmissions he obtained during his illustrious life. His *gsan-yig* is as essential for information on the scriptural and biographical history of Tibetan religion as is the fifth Dalai Lama's work, and for our purposes, particularly the *gter-ma* tradition of Karma-gling-pa. Here, Gter-bdag-gling-pa provides an extensive list of titles and names of authors for works belonging to the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*,[156] and establishes the succession of teachers involved in its transmission.[157] In this latter section, we learn that the specific O-rgyan Smin-gling tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was formed by the convergence of three distinct lines of transmission, two of which emanated from Rgya-ra-ba and a third from the lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po, a student of Karma-gling-pa's son Nyi-zla-chos-rje.

Puṇya-śrī (Bsod-nams-dpal)

The first lineage, the principal one, begins with two obscure figures. From Rgya-ra-ba the Kar-gling transmission is said to have been passed through one called Bsod-nams-'od-zer to Puṇya-śrī (Bsod-nams-dpal). Regrettably, the precise identities of these individuals have not been established, although both names do occur with some frequency in a number of Smin-gling genealogies.[158] Among other sources, Puṇya-śrī is

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government officials in Lhasa. The association of Smin-grol-gling with Gnas-chung were also close." Smith 1970, p. 7.

[155]In contrast to the *Byang-gter*, or "Northern Treasures" of Rig-'dzin Rgod-ldem-can associated with the monastery of Rdo-rje-brag.

[156]TLSY, fols. 388.7-390.6.

[157]TLSY, fols. 390.6-391.4.

[158]See B2, fols. 15-16; CH; DJTY, fols. 181-184; T7.

known in a lineage listed at the end of a *Bar-do thos-grol* manuscript preserved in the Waddell Collection of the British Library:[159]

> [Karma-gling-pa] gave the command-authorization [of this teaching] to his son Chos-rje-gling-pa [=Nyi-zla-chos-rje] in accordance with prophecy. He in turn gave the oral transmission to Guru Sūryacandra [=Nyi-zla-'od-zer], who then presented it to Puṇya-śrī. He in turn gave it to Rigs-'dzin Byang-chub-gling-pa, who then gave it to Sna-tshogs-rang-grol. From him it went to Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa, who in turn gave it to Padma-phrin-las, and nowadays from him the lineage continues without interruption through the second Kun-mkhyen Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje [=the third Gsung-sprul].

Based on the known date of the last name listed in the colophon—Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje (1598-1669)—the manuscript would appear to have been copied just prior to the time of Gter-bdag-gling-pa, probably around the middle of the seventeenth century. Here, Puṇya-śrī is indicated as having received the transmission directly from the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer, teacher of Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. This relationship is also attested to in the fifth Dalai Lama's *gsan-yig* in reference to the lineage of the *'Pho-ba 'jag-tshugs-ma*, a text derived from the "pure-visions" (*dag-snang*) of Karma-gling-pa's father, Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas.[160] Further details regarding the identity of this person are not specified. Perhaps, as indicated in some of the sources, Puṇya-śrī was a student of Nyi-zla-'od-zer, or maybe, given the notable similarities between the two names, his actual teacher, Bsod-nams-'od-zer (in Gter-dbag-gling-pa's *gsan-yig*), might have been mistakenly conflated

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[159]This is the *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol las srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod gsal-'debs chen-mo*, BL 2201; OR-5355.13, fol. 47b, volume foliation 180v1-4: *des [ie karma gling pa] sras chos rje gling pa la bka' gtad : lung bstan: des gu ru surya tsanda ra mi la bka babs so : des punye shri la : des rigs 'dzin byang chub gling pa la : des sna tshogs rang grol la : des bstan 'dzin grags pa la : des padma phrin las la : de nas da lta kun mkhyen gnyis pa tshul khrims rdo rje'i bar du brgyud pa'i zar ma chad pa'o*. For this valuable reference I am grateful to Burkhard Quessel (e-mail communication of September 18, 1998).

[160]DLSY, vol. 4, fols. 90-91.

with Nyi-zla-'od-zer, or visa versa. We may never know. What does seem certain, however, is that Puṇya-śrī transmitted the teachings of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas and Karma-gling-pa to the *gter-ston* Byang-chub-gling-pa.

Chags Byang-chub-gling-pa and Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol

Not much is known about the life of Byang-chub-gling-pa Bsod-nams-chos-skyong, other than the fact that he was born in Lho-brag Gtam-shul, became a disciple of Padma-gling-pa, and abbot of the monastery that bore his name, Chags Byang-chub-gling.[161] He was the teacher of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, upon whom he bestowed the complete Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* transmission.[162] Sna-tshogs-rang-grol was born in Lho-brag Man-thang and was recognized as the immediate incarnation of *gter-ston* Ratna-gling-pa.[163] At fifteen, he was ordained at the monastery of Lha-lung-lhun-grub, which at that time was controlled by the Karma-pa.[164] Among his many teachers, apart from Byang-chub-gling-pa and Padma-gling-pa, he studied with Mtshungs-med Kun-dga'-rgyal-mtshan (Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba), Rdzogs-chen Kun-dga'-bkra-shis, and Sman-rtse-ba Mati-dhāja. It was from the latter that Sna-tshogs-rang-grol also received a second transmission of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*. This line became the second minor lineage that helped to shape the specific Kar-gling tradition fostered at Smin-grol-gling monastery.[165]

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[161]GKCB, p. 653; Bradburn 1995, p. 190; cf. also Aris 1988, p. 233n.177. During the time of the fifth Dalai Lama, the residents of Byang-chub-gling were responsible for playing the role of the *ging* in the famous *glud-'gong* ceremony. See Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, p. 509.

[162]B2, fols. 15-16; CH; DJTY, fols. 181-184; T7; TLSY, fol. 390.

[163]BDTT, vol. 3, p. 723; GKCB, p. 697; ZCGT, p. 182. This figure should not be confused with either Rgod-tshang-ras-pa Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, author of the biography of Gtsang-smyon He-ru-ka (1452-1507), or Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (1608-1680), first incarnation of Mtshungs-med Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje (1533-1605). See Smith 1969a, p. 30.

[164]This Rnying-ma-pa monastery became the principal seat of the Gsung-sprul and Thugs-sras incarnations of *gter-ston* Padma-gling-pa. In its later history, Lha-lung became closely affiliated with the Dge-lugs-pa order after it had been taken over by the fifth Dalai Lama. See GKCB, pp. 653-664; Ferrari 1958, pp. 58 and 139-140; Aris 1988, pp. 69-71; Dorje 1996, pp. 277-278; Richardson 1998, p. 323-324.

[165]TLSY, fol. 391.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to uncover information about this transmission, or anything about its two main protagonists, Sman-rtse-ba Mati-dhāja and his teacher Nam-mkha'-legs-pa. Nevertheless, Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol received these two Kar-gling transmissions—one from Byang-chub-gling-pa and another from Sman-rtse-ba. A third one, as we shall soon see, was passed to him by Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub.

In the wood-sheep year 1535, when Sna-tshogs-rang-grol was forty-two years old, he consecrated the mountain hermitage (*ri-khrod*) of Dar-rgyas-chos-sding[-gling] in the valley of Grwa-nang, which later came to be identified retroactively as the ancestral seat of O-rgyan Smin-grol-gling.[166] Most notable among Sna-tshogs-rang-grol's successors at Dar-rgyas-chos-sding were his "heart-son" (*thugs-sras*) Kun-dga'-grags-pa and the second Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa. He transmitted the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* practices to both of these students.[167] The fact that, at this time, Sna-tshogs-rang-grol held three distinct lineages of Karma-gling-pa's *gter-ma* cycle meant most likely that Dar-rgyas-chos-sding was a principal center of practice for its liturgy during the latter half of the sixteenth century. Moreover, his bestowal of these teachings upon the second Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa (1536-1597) sometime between the years 1549 and 1555 made him a key link in the introduction of the Kar-gling tradition to his old home in Lho-brag, at the monastery of Lha-lung-lhun-grub. This was the future seat of the great compilers of the *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum*, Gong-ra Lo-chen Gzhan-phan-rdo-rje (1594-1654) and the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje.[168] We will have reason to return to these pivotal figures in the section below. Here, however, we should stress the importance of the relationship that had been established in the sixteenth century

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[166]Ferrari 1958, pp. 55 and 133; Dowman 1988, p. 170; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, vol. 2, p. 79n.1118 and map 6 (J16); Dorje 1996, p. 231

[167]Sna-tshogs-rang-grol had invited Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa to Tibet in 1549. After remaining for six years at Dar-rgyas-chos-sding, he left for Lho-brag in 1555. See PGKR, fol. 558.

[168]On which see Ehrhard 1997; Mayer 1996, pp. 227-229.

between the monasteries of Dar-rgyas-chos-sding and Lho-brag Lha-lung. In the generations following that period, this association would have significant consequences in terms of the further dissemination of the Kar-gling tradition, and of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in particular, beyond the borders of Tibet.

Mdo-sngags-bstan-'dzin and 'Phrin-las-lhun-grub

Sometime after Sna-tshogs-rang-grol's death in 1570, his two main students, Kun-dga'-grags-pa and Gsung-sprul Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa, together transmitted the Kar-gling teachings to Mkhas-grub Mdo-sngags-bstan-'dzin (1576-1628/48) of the Gnyos (Smyos) clan.[169] Mdo-sngags-bstan-'dzin was the first recognized incarnation of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol and childhood student of the fifth Zhwa-dmar Dkon-mchog-yan-lag-'bangs (1525-1583).[170] His activities relevant to the preservation of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* are not known, although it is certain that he transmitted the *gter-ma* to his son, Gsang-bdag 'Phrin-las-lhun-grub (1611-1662), who had been born at the monastery of Chags Byang-chub-gling.[171] This great figure spent his early years at Lha-lung under the direction of the third Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag-rgya-mtsho (1567-1633) and later studied with Lo-chen Gzhan-phan-rdo-rje,[172] Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje, and Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol.[173] His chief disciples were his sons Gter-bdag-gling-pa and

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[169]The ancestral clan of Padma-gling-pa, renowned for its long lineage of tantric priests. See Roerich 1949, *passim*.; Aris 1978, pp. 37-38n.14; Aris 1988a, pp. 21, 24; Aris 1988b, pp. 15-24; Aris 1994; Martin 1997, pp. 68, no. 114 and 197-198, no. 516.
[170]TLSY, fol. 390; cf. also GKCB, p. 700, on Mdo-sngags-bstan-'dzin's relationship with these two prominent personalities.
[171]GKCB, p. 701.
[172]From Gong-ra Lo-chen he received especially the Anuyoga transmissions of the Zur and Khams traditions. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 723-726.
[173]GKCB, p. 702.

Chos-rgyal-bstan-'dzin (Lo-chen Dharma-śrī, 1654-1717), to whom he granted the entirety of the Kar-gling transmissions that he inherited from his own father.[174]

Gter-bdag-gling-pa and Lo-chen Dharma-śrī

By the end of the seventeenth century, O-rgyan Smin-grol-gling had superceded its older mother institution, Dar-rgyas-chos-sding, as the principal center of Rnying-ma activities in the lower regions of the Grwa-nang and Grwa-phyi valleys of central Tibet. The monastery's founder, Gter-bdag-gling-pa—with the help of his younger brother, Lo-chen Dharma-śrī—established a vibrant and successful community of scholar-monks, artisans, and meditators, all of whom fostered the "Old Translation" (*snga-'gyur*) teachings, as well as the so-called "Southern Treasures" (*lho-gter*). Furthermore, Gter-bdag-gling-pa and his benefactors were prolific producers of important religious manuscripts, including editions of both the *Bka'-'gyur* (in gold and silver) and the *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum*.[175] The latter collection, compiled from original manuscripts gathered from Zur 'Ug-pa-lung, Kong-po Thang-'brog, Gtsang-rong, and Dar-rgyas-chos-sding was completed in 1685-86 in twenty-three volumes and came to serve as a major source-edition for the famous Sde-dge redaction of 1794-1798.[176] Gter-bdag-gling-pa and his brother are thus seen as chief custodians of the major literary traditions preserved and promoted by the Rnying-ma-pa of that period. Their recensional efforts had a direct bearing on the history of not only the *Bka'-'gyur* and *Rgyud-'bum* as authoritative collections, but also on the many lineages of teaching that had over time converged and taken shape at Smin-grol-gling and surrounding areas of central Tibet.

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[174] 'Phrin-las-lhun-grub bestowed the Kar-gling transmission upon his son Gter-bdag-gling-pa in 1655 at Byang-chub-gling. See TLNT, vol. 2, fols. 43-44. This is yet another example of the granting of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* transmission to students at a very young age.
[175] GKCB, p. 705; Mayer 1996, pp. 228-229; Ehrhard 1997, p. 253.
[176] TLNT, vol. 1, fol. 290.4-6; cf. also Mayer 1996, pp. 229 and 235.

It is in this light that we must view the particular tradition of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* preserved by Gter-bdag-gling-pa and his successors. Their tradition is best exemplified by a few minor texts scattered throughout the various recensions of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and by two complete editions that appear to be based on textual traditions followed at Smin-grol-gling (B2 and B5). These two collections are not derived, however, from witnesses preserved in that particular monastery, but rather represent later reproductions from blocks housed at two monasteries in Bhutan.[177] Nevertheless, the Smin-gling connections are apparent. For example, edition B2 was originally arranged for publication in the late eighteenth century by the third Rdzogs-chen-pa Nges-don-bstan-'dzin-bzang-po, who had received the Kar-gling transmission from Padma-theg-mchog Bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan (1712-1774), a disciple of Gter-bdag-gling-pa's son, Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal (1694-1758).[178] Edition B5, on the other hand, according to the "catalogue description" of E. Gene Smith, is said to contain textual interpretations by Gter-bdag-gling-pa's brother, Lo-chen Dharma-śri, although this is not indicated explicitly in the actual volume itself. His name does appear, however, in the colophon of a single text found in the middle of that collection. This work, entitled *Cho-ga sdig-sgrib rnam-par sbyong-ba* [*Ritual Thoroughly Purifying Transgressions and Obscurations*], seems to have been based on a smaller liturgical work of Gter-bdag-gling-pa and enhanced by his brother in the wood-female-bird year 1705 at the behest of one lama Rnam-grol-bzang-po of Go-'jo in eastern Tibet.[179] Within

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[177]B2 is from Bum-thang Bkra-shis-chos-gling-pho-brang and B5, Bum-thang Thar-pa-gling.
[178]See B2, fols. 15-16; GKCB, pp. 709-712 (Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal), 871-886 (Padma-theg-mchog Bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan), 800-808 (Nges-don-bstan-'dzin-bzang-po).
[179]B5, text 3; cf. also B3, fols. 189-276. The colophon of B3 (fols. 275.5-276.2) reads: *'dir bka' gter gyi cho ga phan tshun lto sbyar ba ni / snga 'gyur gyi shing rta chen po rnams kyis bka' mas gzhung bsrang / gter ma'i man ngag gis zur brgyan ces rlung ltar grags pa nyid phyag len du btab pa ste / bka' mo dong sprugs kyi cho ga'i khog phub kyis bcad gzhir bshag pa la / zab gter 'di nyid kyi rdo rje'i tshig gong 'og 'brel bsdebs te gyer sgom sgrags ma'i tshul du sbyar ba yin pa'i phyir ro / de ltar zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi cho ga sdig sgrib rnam par sbyong ba zhes bya ba 'di ni mdo khams go 'jo bla ma rnam grol bzang po dbon slob kyis bskul ba las / rje btsun bla ma dam pa gter chen chos kyi rgyal po'i bka' drin gyis 'tsho ba'i gnyos kyi dge slong rgan po dharma śris gter byon gyi las byang chung bas*

the entire corpus of literature associated with the Kar-gling revelations, this text stands as one of three works explicitly linked to Gter-bdag-gling-pa and his tradition—the other two being the extremely brief *Smon-lam rdo-rje'i rgya-mdud* [*Vajra-knot Prayer*][180] attributed to Rig-'dzin 'Gyur-med-rdo-rje (alias Gter-bdag-gling-pa), and the *'Dzab-bzlas tshangs-pa'i sgra-dbyangs 'khor-'das rang-grol* [*Self-liberation of Samsara and Nirvana entitled "The Brahma Sound Melody Recitation"*], which was completed by one Ban-sprang 'Bad-bstan-pa and derived in part from practices established by the "old-timers" (*rnying-rgan*) Gter-bdag-gling-pa, and so forth.[181]

Although there can be little certainty at this stage, there can surely be no doubt that the fundamental texts upon which the Smin-grol-gling tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was founded contained core material in common with the other traditions, including most likely the prayers and instructions on the six types of bardo, the affiliated ritual techniques of the *Zhi-khro* mandala, and the liturgical manuals of Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. In addition to the texts prepared by Gter-bdag-gling-pa himself, his brother Lo-chen Dharma-śri, and their immediate descendants, there must also have been earlier texts known only within the traditions of their predecesors. Of particular interest in this regard are the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmissions that were handed down through Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol at Dar-rgyas-chos-sding and the second Pad-gling incarnation at

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gzhung bsrang ba las kha 'gengs dgos pa rnams las byang che ba sogs las kyang bskangs shing bdag 'jug dang bcas khyer bde bar shing mo bya lo ston zla smin drug zla ba'i yar ngo'i nyin bzhi la rdzogs par nyis bris spangs te sug bris su spel ba'o / 'dis kyang sems can thams cad sdig sgrib kyi 'ching ba las rnam par grol ba'i rgyur gyur cig / de ltar rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po'i lam las zung 'jug gi rtogs pa mthar son pa rmad du byung ba'i lo tsā ba g.yu sgra snying po'i rnam 'phrul gnas brtan chen po dharma śris legs par stsal ba'i zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi las byang cha lag dang bcas snying por dril ba 'di nyid slar yang nyer mkho'i yan lag 'ga' zhig gis kyang brgyan te bklags pas grub par rig pa 'dzin pa rDo rje gzi brjid rtsal gyis bsdebs pa'o / de las byung ba'i legs byas snang ba yis / 'gro kun sgrib gnyis mun pa rab gsal nas / sku dang ye shes phrin las rmad byung ba'i / rnam grol thar pa'i grong du 'jug gyur cig.

[180]ZH, fols. 511-512.

[181]CH, fols. 297-306; NE; T5; T6, fols. 205-218; T8, vol. 1, fols. 203-211. The colophons of this text read: *'di ga'i bum bzlas* [*byin slobs*, T6] *sogs phal cher ni gter bdag gling pa sogs rnying rgan rnams kyis gsang sngags bla med lugs phyag bzhes su mdzad pa ltar yod pas yid ches kyi gnas su nges par mdzod / 'dzab skor dang tshig cha shas 'di ban sprang bde ba* ['*bad* ?] *bstan pas bgyis pa'o // sarvamaṅgalaṃ*. See NE; T6, fols. 218.2-3; T8, vol. 1, fols. 211.5-6.

Lho-brag Lha-lung. Judging from the contents of the Waddell manuscript held in the British Library—prepared it seems by the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul—the content of this special older transmission would likely have included the ***Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*** and the ***Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod***, the two works that together have become famous as the ***Tibetan Book of the Dead*** (see discussion in Chapter 2).

To summarize thus far, the textual and liturgical tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* at the monastery of Smin-grol-gling originated from the convergence of three distinct transmissions received through Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol of Dar-rgyas-chos-sding monastery. The tradition was first promoted by his two main successors and eventually passed through the descendants of his reincarnation, Mdo-sngags-bstan-'dzin. The latter's eldest grandson, Gter-bdag-gling-pa, continued the lineage and established its practice at the newly founded monastery of O-rgyan Smin-grol-gling. This institution became a principal center for the bestowal of the requisite Kar-gling initiations and instructions upon religious pilgrims from all regions of Tibet and surrounding areas, including Khams and northwestern Nepal. As an illustration, we should cite the biography of the Dolpo lama, Bsod-nams-dbang-phyug (1660-1731), abbot of the G.yas-mtsher and Mtha'-dkar monasteries. Here, we are told that this lama traveled to Smin-grol-gling sometime around 1687 (shortly after a terrible outbreak of small-pox) and requested from some unspecified high-ranking lama the initiations for the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.*[182] Given the specific date, we can only presume that the master of ceremonies must have been Gter-bdag-gling-pa himself, or perhaps his younger brother, Lo-chen Dharma-śrī.

After the tragic assassinations in 1717-1718 of both Lo-chen Dharma-śrī and Gter-bdag-gling-pa's second eldest son, Padma-'gyur-med-rgya-mtsho (1686-1718) at the

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[182]Snellgrove 1967, p. 258.

hands of the Dzungar Mongols,[183] the Smin-gling tradition was carried on through the third son, Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal. It was, however, Padma-'gyur-med-rgya-mtsho who, shortly before his death, transmitted the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* to O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin (alias Guru Bsod-nams-bstan-'dzin, 1701-1728), the adopted child of Gter-bdag-gling-pa and son of the infamous sorceror from Khams, Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa.[184] In the person of this child O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin were combined two major traditions—one represented by Gter-bdag-gling-pa of Smin-grol-gling and another by Nyi-ma-grags-pa of the monastery of Stag-mo-sgang (which he founded). We should point out that this second tradition had also been received previously through Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol and as such represented the third transmission line that converged with two others to form the full-fledged Smin-grol-gling tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*. We shall soon see that Nyi-ma-grags-pa's lineage came from a transmission received through several diverse personalities, including Dwags-po Rtse-le Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal, Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen, Kong-po Thang-'brog Sprul-sku Padma-legs-grub (alias Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol), and the Pad-gling incarnations of Lho-brag Lha-lung. It is this particular lineage that is mentioned exclusively in connection with the obscure Kar-gling cycle *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol*.[185] But most importantly it appears to be the principal transmission lineage of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. In the remaining pages of this chapter we shall focus on this distinctive tradition and, reaching further back in time, attempt to document the ways in which the scriptural transmission of the *Dbang-bzhi*

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[183]On the Dzungar invasion of central Tibet see Petech 1972, pp. 29-30; Shakabpa 1984, esp. pp. 134-139; Smith 1996, pp. 123-126.

[184]GKCB, pp. 859-860, 866. On the life of O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin, see GKCB, pp. 864-870. It might be that O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin was in reality the lama named Mkhan-chen Oḍḍiyāna, who some have identified as the son of Rin-chen-rnam-rgyal, the third Smin-gling-khri-chen. See Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 733-734; Bradburn 1995, pp. 309-310.

[185]TLSY, fol. 391; cf. also B1; B2, fols. 15-16; B4; DH; T3; T6; TMLG, fols. 66a-b; NBDS, fol. 231.

phrad-tshad rang-grol and the *Bar-do thos-grol* might have been constituted after the period of Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje.

5. THE RTSE-LE, THANG-'BROG, AND LHA-LUNG TRANSMISSIONS

The area of the earliest diffusion of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was arguably those parts of Tibet where Karma-gling-pa's son, Nyi-zla-chos-rje, had been active in his own lifetime and where his immediate successors were settled. This area was located between the southeastern districts of Dwags-po, Long-po, and Kong-po. From there the tradition soon spread south possibly to Mtsho-sna (also Mon-yul)—where we earlier speculated Rgya-ra-ba's family monastery may have been located—to the Grwa-nang valley, and then further south to the region of Lho-brag. It was here, at the monastery of Lha-lung-lhun-grub, that two known Kar-gling traditions were received through the successive incarnations of the *gter-ston* Padma-gling-pa. The first of these traditions was transmitted through Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol to the second Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa. Both figures were also involved in the transmission of the second tradition, which was specifically associated with the obscure Kar-gling text cycles *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* and *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. The main lineage of this transmission, however, appears to have passed not through Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, but rather through Rtse-le Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal. Eventually it was transmitted through that other famous "Sna-tshogs-rang-grol"—the one tied to Rtse-le monastery—to the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje of Lha-lung monastery in Lho-brag. These pedigrees can get rather confusing, so in this section we will attempt a concise sketch of the history of the tradition's earliest protaganists.

We should state clearly at the outset that the lineage of the *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* is identical to the lineage of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* inherited by Rig-

'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. As we shall see in the next chapter, this *gter-ston* appears to have been the one responsible for establishing the standard textual arrangement of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in the form that is most accessible to us today. The famous *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, as it is known in western-language translations, was and continues to be based almost exclusively on Nyi-ma-grags-pa's redaction. This significant fact has direct bearing on any scholarly claim regarding the history of this literature in Tibet, but surprisingly this detail has never been acknowledged in the secondary literature. My point here is not to argue that this particular textual tradition of the *Bar-do thos-grol* was the only tradition of that collection that ever existed in Tibet, but rather to highlight the significance of its being practically the only tradition of its kind accessible *outside* of Tibet. We shall continue this discussion in the next chapter on Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa, but for now let us consider the earlier lineage of the *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* and *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. To do so, we must first return to the story of Nyi-zla-chos-rje described in the seventeenth-century historical work *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*.

Lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje and Rig-'dzin Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal

According to the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus*, the first person to promote the *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* was Karma-gling-pa's father, the *gter-ston* Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas (alias Lung-zin Dngos-grub-rgyal-po).[186] This enigmatic figure is said to have bestowed the *Dbang-bzhi* transmission upon his grandson, Nyi-zla-chos-rje (alias Nam-mkha'-sangs-rgyas),[187] with the injunction that it should be transmitted only to the single person authorized by prophecy.[188] Nyi-zla-chos-rje then traveled to Kong-po in order to locate

[186]TMLG, fol. 66a. Guru Bkra-shis gives the name Dngos-grub-rgya-tsho without identifying it with that of Nyi-zla-sang-rgyas. See GKCB, p. 460.
[187]Guru Bkra-shis gives the name Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, suggesting that the person who received this transmission was actually Rgya-ra-ba. See GKCB, p. 460. The other transmission accounts, however, do not support this identification.
[188]TMLG, fol. 66b.

this special student, and there in retreat at some unspecified mountain hermitage we learn that he met the lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje. Nyi-zla-chos-rje determined through oneiromancy that this solitary holy man was meant to be the appointed disciple fit to receive the *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol*. The exchange was thus completed. Previously, we suggested tentatively that this Mgon-po-rdo-rje may have been the fourth Drung of Kaḥ-thog monastery, but we should not be too certain about this speculation. First, the dates appear to be anachronistic, since it is unlikely that Nyi-zla-chos-rje was active during the term of office of the fourth Drung in the latter half of the fifteenth century. If that had been the case, Karma-gling-pa's son would have been a contemporary of Rgya-ra-ba and this is not corroborated in any of the sources consulted thus far. Secondly, the Mgon-po-rdo-rje mentioned in the *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus* is clearly described as a mountain hermit absorbed in retreat somewhere in Kong-po. The Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kaḥ-thog, chief administrator of that ecclessiastic institution in Khams, is difficult to picture in this context. So then, who else could we identify?

In Chapter 3 we discussed briefly a Mgon-po-rdo-rje known widely as Chos-ldan-pa, the younger brother of Sman-lung-pa Sākya-'od (alias Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje). We may recall that Sman-lung-pa had a number of disciples from Dwags-po and that the successors of these students included the teachers of Kun-mkhyen Chos-sku-'od-zer, founder of the old monastery of Rtse-le Rnying-ma.[189] This strong Rtse-le connection makes it difficult to ignore the possibility of a link between Chos-ldan-pa and our Mgon-po-rdo-rje. But, admittedly, there are serious anachronistic problems with this identification. At the very least we can be certain that, to some degree, the Sman-lung and Rtse-le traditions shared a lineal connection.

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[189]These being Se-sdeng-pa Sangs-rgyas-dpal and his nephew, Se-sdeng-pa Gu-ṇa-pha-la, both students of Gnyan-ston Rdo-rje-ye-shes. See GKCB, p. 727.

Lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje from Kong-po bestowed the Kar-gling transmission of the *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* (and presumably the *Bar-do thos-grol* as well) upon one Rig-'dzin Lha-dbang-rnam-rgyal, who in turn presented it to Mkhas-grub Kun-dga'-lhun-grub, a.k.a. Rgya-ma Mi-'gyur-ba.[190] This important master, in turn, transmitted the teachings to both Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol and Rtse-le Rig-'dzin-chen-po Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal.[191] From Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, as we noted above, the *Dbang-bzhi* was passed through the lineage of his successors at Dar-rgyas-chos-sdings and eventually reached Gter-bdag-gling-pa of Smin-grol-gling. The Kar-gling tradition that came from Rtse-le Bsod-nams-rnam-rgyal, on the other hand, was passed through Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-rin-chen to Bya-khyung Ngag-dbang-padma and then to Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-dbang-po.[192] Both Ngag-dbang-padma and Bsod-nams-dbang-po were active in Kong-po during the latter half of the sixteenth century. Bsod-nams-dbang-po was the chief mentor of Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, to whom he granted the entirety of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.[193] I have called this lineal tradition the "Rtse-le Transmission", because it came from a transmission received through a number of teachers affiliated with that monastery in Dwags-po, reaching as far back as Guru Kun-dga'-lhun-grub and ending with Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol. In the early decades of the seventeenth century, the Rtse-le transmission appears to have been conjoined with the earlier tradition of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol and later to have been maintained by the Pad-gling incarnations at Lho-brag Lha-lung.

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[190]We should stress again that an alternative *Bar-do thos-grol* lineage emanating from Mgon-po-rdo-rje was transmitted through one Dgongs-'dus-pa Chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan and was eventually established at Zur-mang monastery.

[191]B1; B2, fols. 15-16; B4; DH; T3; T6; TLSY, fol. 391.

[192]We mentioned previously that all three of these Rdzogs-chen figures are known in a lineage described by Guru Bkra-shis in reference to the Snying-thig system of Klong-chen-pa. See GKCB, pp. 214-240, esp. pp. 225-227. On the life of Bsod-nams-dbang-po, see DZSN.

[193]TSNG, fol. 34.3.

Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol

Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol (alias Padma-legs-grub, Kong-po Rgod-tshang-pa, Kong-po Thang-'brog-sprul-sku) was born in 1608 at the border between Kong-po and Dwags-po. He was recognized as the immediate incarnation of Mtshungs-med Bstan-'dzin-rdo-rje, founder of the monasteries of Kong-po Thang-'brog, Gtsang-po Mgo-dgu, and Long-po Bde-chen.[194] Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol's main seat was at Thang-'brog, where at the age of six (and against his parents wishes) he underwent the tonsure ceremony (*gtsug-phud phul-ba*). At that time he was given the name Karma-rig-'dzin-rnam-par-rgyal-ba by the third Dpa'-bo Gtsug-lag-rgya-mtsho.[195] He was ordained shortly thereafter at the Dpa'-bo's own monastery in Lho-brag. For the next several years, between 1615 and 1618, he studied under Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-dbang-po and received a great number of Rdzogs-chen Snying-thig teachings, including Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. Soon he met Stag-bla Padma-mati and his entourage while they were passing through Kong-po.[196] This meeting must have taken place at roughly the same time that this famous Kaḥ-thog scholar-monk was traveling through central Tibet.[197] Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol and Padma-mati each bestowed teachings upon the other, but there is no indication that the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was among them.[198]

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[194]TSLG, fols. 332-363; GKCB, pp. 745-746. The old monastery of Thang-'brog was refurbished in 1565. Mgo-dgu was established in 1577 and Long-po Bde-chen in 1579.

[195]TSNG, fol. 31; GKCB, p. 746.

[196]TSNG, fol. 48; GKCB, p. 746.

[197]Recall that it was also during this trip that Padma-mati first met Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol.

[198]Rtse-le's other prominent teachers around this period included the great Rig-'dzin 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po of Kong-po (1585-1656) (see TSNG, *passim*; GKCB, pp. 442-446; Bradburn 1995, pp. 232-233), his "doctrine-master" Ra-zhi Gter-ston Padma-rig-'dzin-rtsal of Spo-bo Rba-kha—from whom he received the name Padma-legs-grub—(see Bradburn 1995, p. 242), and Lha-btsun Kun-bzang-rnam-rgyal (alias Nam-mkha'-'jigs-med, 1597-1650), a resident of Thang-'brog-dgon and student of Rdzogs-chen Bsod-nams-dbang-po (see GKCB, pp. 227-228 and 615-616; Bradburn 1995, pp. 237-238).

Gong-ra Lo-chen Gzhan-phan-rdo-rje

Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol eventually traveled to Gong-ra Lhun-grub-chos-sding in Gtsang-rong[199] and met the Sikkimese scholar Gong-ra Lo-chen Gzhan-phan-rdo-rje, student of Sog-bzlog-pa Blo-gros-rgyal-mtshan and the sixth Zhwa-dmar Gar-dbang-chos-kyi-dbang-phyug.[200] This outstanding scholar is best known for his efforts in compiling three sets of manuscripts of the *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum*, each prepared on separate occasions and for different purposes.[201] The first copy remained at Lhun-grub-sding in Gong-ra, while the second was sent to some unspecified monastery in Khams (possibly Kaḥ-thog?); the third was sent to Kong-po, presumably to the monastery of Thang-'brog, as an offering to Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol.[202] Gong-ra Lo-chen and Rtse-le Sna-tshogs shared a close mutual teacher-student relationship. Shortly after his ordination at Lho-brag Lha-lung, Rtse-le Sna-tshogs went into strict retreat (*bcad-rgya*) at a forest hermitage. For eighteen months, day and night, he studied with Gong-ra Lo-chen.[203] Although we do not know the precise date when Rtse-le first presented the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* transmission to his teacher, it seems clear that it must have occurred during this retreat period. In his autobiography, he reminisces that it was at that time that he bestowed upon the Rje-btsun Lo-chen the experiential instructions of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*.[204] Later, Lo-chen Gzhan-phan-rdo-rje passed these teachings on to the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul of Lho-brag Lha-lung, with whom he shared a close disciple-cum-master relationship.

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[199]Dorje 1996, p. 320.
[200]ZCGT, pp. 274-275; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 723-724; Bradburn 1995, pp. 235-236.
[201]BDTT, vol. 4, p. 360; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 723-724; Bradburn 1995, p. 236; Mayer 1996, p. 227; Ehrhard 1997, p. 253n.1.
[202]Mayer 1996, p. 228.
[203]GKCB, p. 746.
[204]TSNG, fol. 133.

Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje

Like Gong-ra Lo-chen, Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje was a pivotal figure in the transmission of the ***Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum***. In fact, it was he who first gave Lo-chen Gzhan-phan-rdo-rje the "reading" (*lung*) of this large set of scriptures.[205] Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje had been previously granted the transmission at Lhun-grub-pho-brang, family seat of Ratna-gling-pa.[206] The so-called "Ratna" tradition passed through a number of distinct transmission lines before it was eventually received by both the fifth Dalai Lama and Gter-bdag-gling-pa.[207] For our purposes, the relevance of these details concerning the transmission of the ***Rgyud-'bum*** in Lho-brag (and Kong-po) during the first half of the seventeenth century is made clear when we stop to emphasize that both Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje and Gong-ra Lo-chen were also principal players in the circulation of Karma-gling-pa's ***Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*** in that very same region of Tibet. We are certain that both figures were responsible for preparing and redacting new complete sets of the ***Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum***, and presumably a number of other important religious manuscripts as well. Through their efforts the Rnying-ma-pas of that period witnessed the inimitable proliferation of manuscript copies of some of their most sacred literature, the significance of which must be stated explicitly. The redactional efforts of Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje, Gong-ra Lo-chen, and others like them are remarkable not only because their work represented a conscious attempt to bring together in complete form numerous individual texts scattered locally throughout the region—many believed to be less than authentic by the standards of other schools—but also because they were intent on distributing such works once compiled to all major centers of learning and practice. The

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[205]GKCB, p. 655.
[206]Ehrhard 1997, p. 256n.8.
[207]Mayer 1996, p. 227, quoting Ehrhard, unpublished manuscript. On Lhun-grub-pho-brang, see GKCB, p. 653.

result was the beginning of a widespread diffusion of religious teaching, and particularly that of the Rnying-ma-pa, throughout Tibet just prior to the great age of printing.

Much of Tibetan sacred literature during this period, and even later into the nineteenth century (e.g., Kong-sprul's *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*), came essentially in the form of "anthologies" rather than individual "books". These anthologies, however, were not always intended or written as such, by either author or scribe, for single works written or copied earlier at one monastery might be attached decades later to a separate series of texts at another institution several hundred miles away. It would seem that the purpose of this stitching together of disparate texts was to compile complete volumes of works relevant to the traditions and activities of particular local centers. In the case of the monumental *Rgyud-'bum*, this gathering of texts represented less the idiosyncratic customs of a single monastery and more the fundamental teachings of a collective tradition, specifically that of the Rnying-ma-pa. On the other hand, the smaller collections like the *gter-ma* cycles of Rdo-rje-gling-pa or Karma-gling-pa, for example, tended to be patched together in a variety of forms, each reflecting a different lineage of transmission and/or the unique interpretations of local lamas. In any event, it was the "anthologizing" pioneers like Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje and Gong-ra Lo-chen who contributed to the success of such compilations—both large and small—during the first half of the seventeenth century. These manuscript anthologies would later serve as *editio princeps* for woodblock redactions printed for wider distribution. We can only presume that the efforts of Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje and Gong-ra Lo-chen with regard to the preparation of the *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum* must have been repeated, though certainly on a much smaller scale, in the preservation of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. In this way, the Kar-gling tradition fostered at Rtse-le and Thang-'brog monasteries—which this duo inherited from Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-

grol—was transplanted to Lho-brag Lha-lung where possibly it may have been more fully edited and calligraphed.

We do not know at this stage the precise content of the early Rtse-le/Lha-lung redaction of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. Nevertheless, if we accept that the old manuscript edition collected by Waddell in 1904 represents a version of this Lha-lung transmission, then perhaps we might suggest that originally the collection contained the following texts:

1. *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsol-'debs thos-grol chen-mo*
2. *Bar-do'i rtsa-tshig drug-ma*
3. *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*
4. *Zhing-khams lnga'i smon-lam thong-bar rang-grol*
5. *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod gsal-'debs chen-mo*
6. *Phyogs-bcu'i sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' ram-'da' sgron-pa'i smon-lam*

I have as yet been unable to consult this manuscript, so I cannot comment here on the actual content of these texts. It is clear, however, that with only slight variation in sequence the textual arrangement of this particular collection resembles the core set of *Bar-do thos-grol* texts that we discussed in Chapter 2. We see then that this Lha-lung version contains the requisite bardo prayers (with variant titles) and the fundamental *Zhi-khro* sādhana *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*. In addition, it also includes perhaps the earliest witnesses of the famous *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*. We should recall that these two works are found in only a small minority of existing Kar-gling editions, and more precisely in only those editions linked primarily to the lineage received through the Pad-gling incarnations at Lho-brag Lha-lung. Is it possible that these texts were first composed in the seventeenth century at this pivotal

institution? Answers to this intriguing question cannot be sufficiently addressed at this stage, but I hope to pursue the matter in my future research. Whatever the outcome, I would presume that the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje was probably the figure who was most instrumental in editing and compiling these texts. From him, the Lha-lung transmission was passed to the fourth Pad-gling Thugs-sras Bstan-'dzin-'gyur-med-rdo-rje, who in turn transmitted it to one Rig-'dzin O-rgyan-chos-rgyal. The identity of this latter figure is not clear, although Guru Bkra-shis specifies that he was a "bone" relative of Padma-gling-pa (*pad-gling gdung-brgyud*).[208]

The Pad-gling Thugs-sras incarnation line, based also at Lha-lung monastery, descended from Padma-gling-pa's son, Zla-ba-rgyal-mtshan (b.1499), who was one of Gsung-sprul Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa's early teachers at Bum-thang in Bhutan.[209] Zla-ba-rgyal-mtshan's own son was Padma-'phrin-las, who in 1613 founded the important Bhutanese Rnying-ma monastery of Sgang-steng Gsang-sngags-chos-gling in Shar.[210] Padma-'phrin-las is listed in the colophon of the Waddell manuscript quoted above. Here, he is indicated as having received the text's transmission from Gsung-sprul Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa and then to have passed it on to Kun-mkhyen Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje—the last name in the series. The Waddell text, therefore, must have been prepared in the last half of the seventeenth century by either Tshul-khrim-rdo-rje himself or one of his immediate disciples. This small piece of evidence indicates clearly that the Kar-gling transmission was received through a number of important successors of Padma-gling-pa's tradition, including his grandson Padma-'phrin-las. We can even argue that this latter figure represents a link in the tradition between the second and third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul incarnations, connecting the two lineages of Dar-rgyas-chos-sding/Smin-grol-gling and

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[208]GKCB, p. 858.
[209]PGKR, fol. 559.
[210]PGKR, fol. 562; Aris 1979, p. 164; Dorje 1996, p. 730.

Lho-brag Lha-lung, respectively. Keep in mind that both lines emanated from Padma-gling-pa's student Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol. All of this leads me to believe that our nebulous Pad-gling descendant Rig-'dzin O-rgyan-chos-rgyal must have been a son or nephew of Padma-'phrin-las. Regrettably, we must await further evidence to make a decisive claim. We can say at this point, however, that O-rgyan-chos-rgyal appears to have been the first teacher to bestow this particular Kar-gling transmission upon Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa, a controversial *gter-ston* from Khams who was responsible for preparing a redacted edition of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. This edition has since become the standard arrangement of what we know today as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. The story of the life and times of this intriguing figure and of the creation of this Tibetan classic is the subject of my final chapter.

5.

The Making of the *Bar-do thos-grol*

We mentioned briefly in the last chapter that the arrangement of the texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, in the form that is most accessible to us today, appears to have been the work of a *gter-ston* from Khams named Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. The vast majority of western-language translations of the so-called *Tibetan Book of the Dead* were, and continue to be, based almost exclusively on Nyi-ma-grags-pa's redaction, and hence this rather controversial figure is of great significance to our understanding the later history of the *Bar-do thos-grol* within and beyond the borders of Tibet from the late seventeenth century onwards. In this chapter, I will focus on the life and work of *gter-ston* Nyi-ma-grags-pa and inquire into how his particular redaction of the Kar-gling textual tradition came to be the standard arrangement for almost all subsequent editions outside of Tibet. In the end, I will survey what we presently know about the history of the different blockprints and modern facsimiles of the *Bar-do thos-grol*.

1. RIG-'DZIN NYI-MA-GRAGS-PA, SORCEROR FROM KHAMS

Regrettably, not much is available about Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa in either Tibetan or western-language sources, apart from a rather extensive biographical account of his activities in the *Chos-'byung* of Guru Bkra-shis,[1] and a few brief references to him in the

[1]GKCB, pp. 820-860, *passim*. We can be certain that Guru Bkra-shis had a close connection to Nyi-ma-grags-pa's tradition. Apart from residing at the latter's main monastic seat at Stag-mo-sgang (where he completed his history), Guru Bkra-shis was also a student of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's first reincarnation, Nyi-sprul I Padma-theg-mchog Bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan (1712-1774). Moreover, he appears to have been a direct descendant of one Nyi-ma-grags-pa's chief patrons, Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa, the third abbot of Lhun-grub-steng and "King" (*chos-rgyal*) of Sde-dge, cf. GKCB, p. 847. Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa commissioned the establishment of a number of significant Rnying-ma-pa monasteries during the seventeenth century, including Nyi-ma-grags-pa's own Stag-mo-sgang. An informative introduction to Guru Bkra-shis and his religious history is provided in Martin 1991b, pp. 329-351. Details on the life and career of Sde-dge Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa can be found in Kolmaś 1968 and 1988.

works of Ramon Prats, Anne-Marie Blondeau, and Dan Martin.[2] As we shall see, such meager representation is undoubtedly a consequence, in part, of sectarian rivalry. I believe it is justifiable, therefore, to provide here a summary of the significant events of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's biography as described in Guru Bkra-shis's monumental history.[3] It is my hope that in the near future this picture might be better enhanced by new discoveries of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's literary works.[4] With the exception of the small two-volume *Rta-mgrin dregs-pa zil-gnon* [*Hayagriva, the Arrogant Subjugator*] and attendant practices,[5] no other work by him has surfaced until very recently. It is clear that Nyi-ma-grags-pa was an active *gter-ston*, as well as a prolific author. So then why are his life and work not easily accessible? The answer is simple, although the details are rather vague and indefinite.

Among certain Tibetan Buddhist circles there is an oral tradition which speaks quietly of a private scandal involving this little-known mystic from eastern Tibet. According to the legend, Nyi-ma-grags-pa is alleged to have utilized his extraordinary powers of "black magic" (*mngon-spyod*) to provoke the untimely death of the tenth Karma-pa Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje (1605-1674).[6] Religious mania (*smyon-pa*) and vengeful arrogance are

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[2]Prats 1982, p. 73n.14; Blondeau 1988, pp. 60n.24; Martin 1991a, pp. 174-178. As far as I can confirm Dieter Michael Back is the only scholar of the *Bar-do thos-grol* literature to have mentioned Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa by name, but he mistakenly denies the latter's position in the transmission lineage. See Back 1987, p. 11

[3]Unless otherwise noted, the summary of the life of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa presented here is based on the accounts of Guru Bkra-shis recorded in GKCB, pp. 820-860. I wish to thank Khenpo Nyima Dondrup for his gracious assistance and advice during the preliminary preparation of this section.

[4]Such as the two versions of his autobiography—the "extensive" **Rnam-thar zhal-gsung-ma rgyas* and "abbreviated" **Rnam-thar zhal-gsung-ma bdus*—or the *Klu'i-dbang-po'i skye-phreng*. A list of 59 titles of his writings can be found in the catalogue of Rnying-ma-pa works deposited in the Potala library. See PLKC, pp. 165-167. Franz-Karl Ehrhard has recently informed me of a large manuscript anthology of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's works in thirteen volumes that has just been photographed on microfilm by the Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project. I am sure future research on Nyi-ma-grags-pa and his legacy will benefit from a thorough study of the contents of this potentially valuable collection.

[5]See RZND. Volume one of this collection contains the main liturgical texts for the practice of *Rta-mgrin dregs-pa zil-gnon*—excavated in 1682 from the Flaming Cave (*me-'bar-phug*) of Nag-shod—while the second volume includes short related works on various smoke purification rituals (*bsangs-brngan*). See GKCB, p. 841.

[6]See references in note 2 above.

offered as possible reasons behind this ruthless act of murder. But why exactly was Nyi-ma-grags-pa the one blamed for the crime? How did he earn such a terrible reputation when the fact is that during most of his life he seems to have been a beloved miracle-worker? It has been suggested that Nyi-ma-grags-pa was actually in great demand for his spiritual prowess and forceful control over the hosts of demons plaguing Tibetans and their world. He appears then to have been a rather fierce yet benevolent guardian of Buddhism and perhaps a tragically misunderstood religious savant. More importantly, in addition to his influential role as guru and exorcist to many of Tibet's chief aristocrats of the day, he also played a leading and active role in the redaction of the standard edition of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. In the section below, we will survey the life of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa in an effort to unveil the final stages in the creation of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and to begin to understand what may have contributed to the complicated reputation of its most important redactor.

We know that in Nyi-ma-grags-pa's later years he had become a subject of much anger, jealousy, and even fear among some of his contemporaries. Guru Bkra-shis, who is generally quite sympathetic to Nyi-ma-grags-pa, describes an unfortunate episode involving the *gter-ston* Yongs-dge Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje (b.1628)[7] and some government officials near where Nyi-ma was repairing a stupa in Khams.[8] According to this brief account, Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje—a close affiliate of the Karma Kaṃ-tshang tradition—had wanted to meet this *gter-ston* from Khams, but was stopped short by the officials. These men began hassling Yongs-dge and eventually attacked him physically. For reasons not made clear, Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje blamed Nyi-ma-grags-pa for the irreverent and violent treatment he had suffered at the hands of the government workers. Enraged he shouted, "Nyi-ma-grags-pa is a demon!" and set out to ruin the Khams-pa *gter-ston's* reputation.

[7]On whom see BDTT, vol. 8, part 2, pp. 419-426; GKCB, p. 576; Bradburn 1995, pp. 256-257.
[8]GKCB, p. 28; cf. also Martin 1991a, p. 176.

Apparently, Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje was somewhat successful, for Guru Bkra-shis goes on to say that, as a result, other people with sectarian bias started repeating defaming rumors about him.

In spite of (or perhaps because of) the lavish support given to Nyi-ma-grags-pa during his lifetime, in the years following Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje's conflict with the government officials, his successors and those that shared close ties with the Karma Bka'-brgyud-pa, continued to maintain Nyi-ma-grags-pa's complicity in the affair. Needless to say, these people harbored ill feelings towards him that sowed very deep roots. These negative impressions reached their culmination in the nineteenth century in the person of 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul. We may recall that it was this influential scholar who helped define and shape the ecumenical, or "non-partisan" (*ris-med*), movement that swept eastern Tibet during the latter half of the nineteenth century.[9] Kong-sprul appears to have taken sides, nevertheless, and honored the close ties he had with the Karma-pa sect.[10] Consequently, when compiling his *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*—that monumental collection of initiations and liturgical directives of almost all "treasure cycles" (*gter-skor*) available in Tibet at the time—Kong-sprul chose to exclude the revelations of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa, presumably out of respect to certain members of the Bka'-brgyud tradition. His willful exclusion of these texts in lieu of other less significant, and even "heretical" (read: Bon-po), works became a hot topic of controversy led by one outspoken Rnying-ma-pa teacher named Bstan-'dzin-grags-pa. It is not necessary to explore these controversies, since Blondeau and Martin have investigated them thoroughly.[11] What does bear repeated emphasis, however, is that the scarcity of the works of Nyi-ma-grags-pa and the relative

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[9]See Chapter 4, note 121.
[10]'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul had close ties with the Dpal-spungs Karma-pa, with whom he had taken a second ordination as a Buddhist monk because the lamas of Dpal-spungs refused to recognize his Rnying-ma-pa vows. See Smith 1970, pp. 30-32.
[11]See Blondeau 1985, pp. 111-158; cf. also Martin 1991, pp. 173-181.

paucity of information regarding his life can be linked directly to Kong-sprul's decision to erase this *gter-ston* from history. If it were not for Nyi-ma-grags-pa's unsavory reputation and alleged violent activities then certainly we would know more about this sorcerer from Khams. Perhaps, then, we would also be in a better position to uncover the facts behind the scandals that seemed to pursue him in his later years.

Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa was a persistent and devoted journeyman throughout his life, traveling through much of Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, India, and even into western China. In his many travels, he was often witness to the tumultuous religio-political events taking place in those territories during that seminal period.[12] He was, moreover, personally involved with several key players in the political dramas of his day. In Lhasa, he became the teacher of Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho (1655-1705) and the young sixth Dalai Lama Tshangs-dbyangs-rgya-mtsho (1683-1706). In Khams, he enjoyed the patronage of the royal families of Gling-tshang, Lha-ri, and particularly Sde-dge, where he was especially favored by the Sde-dge king Sang-rgyas-bstan-pa, and later by his successor Chos-rgyal Bstan-pa-tshe-ring (1678-1738). It was this latter figure who almost single-handedly launched the political power of Sde-dge's ruling house by expanding its territory and establishing official contacts with the Manchu rulers of China.[13]

In a word, Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa was an important and powerful presence in seventeenth-century Tibet. As we shall see, not only was he a chief protagonist in spreading the teachings of his own mentor, Rdzogs-chen Padma-rig-'dzin (1625-1697), but he was also unfailing in his efforts to preserve and transmit the works of other major religious leaders such as *gter-chen* Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje (1615-1672),[14] Mnga'-ris *gter-ston*

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[12] On this period, see esp. Ahmad 1970 and 1995; Petech 1972; Shakabpa 1984; W. Smith 1996.
[13] Kolmaś 1968, p. 37 and 1988, p. 130.
[14] On the life of Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje, see especially BDTT, vol. 3, part 1, pp. 815-820; GKCB, pp. 566-570; Bradburn 1995, pp. 250-251.

Zla-ba-rgyal-mtshan (alias Padma-gar-dbang-rdo-rje, 1640-1685),[15] and Gter-bdag-gling-pa.[16] Furthermore, he was said to have held the special authorization to teach a number of important *gter-ma* cycles, including most notably Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro-dgongs-pa rang-grol*. Guru Bkra-shis portrays Nyi-ma-grags-pa as quite a charismatic religious leader, connected with many of Tibet's highest-ranking officials and cherished by legions of faithful followers. This sympathetic portrait of Nyi-ma-grags-pa is precisely what I intend to highlight in the pages that follow.

Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa was born in the fire-female-pig year 1647 in the city of Phyag-sbal in Nang-chen to a family belonging to the clan of Dbra-dkar-po—more specifically that of Byams-me 'Pho-lung-pa, a famous siddha lineage. His father was known as Byams-me Dbon-po Karma-rnam-rgyal and his mother, Bla-za Bsod-nams-mtsho. His birth had been previously forecast in a number of recorded prophecies, such as that found in O-rgyan-gling-pa's *Padma bka'-thang*:

"To men his clothing will appear incongruous,
Even his sacred teachings will be disconsonant.
There will be traces left behind of the designs written at Dge-rgyas [bye-ma-gling].[17]
The treasures of the threefold Srin-mo-rdzong in Khams,
Will not remain there, but signs will appear indicating that they are to be discovered.
[This revealer] will have the name Khams-pa Nyi-ma-grags-pa."[18]

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[15]See GKCB, pp. 580-581; Bradburn 1995, pp. 265-266.

[16]On whom, see Chapter 4; cf. also TLNT and the summary treatment of him in GKCB, pp 703-707; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, vol. 1, pp. 825-834; Bradburn 1995, pp. 270-272.

[17]A temple near Bsam-yas built by 'Brong-za, princess of Khri-srong-lde-btsan (740-797). See Das 1988, p. 270; Prats 1982, p. 71n.1; Sorensen 1994, pp. 375-403; Sakyapa Sonam Gyaltsen 1996, p. 241.

[18]PMKT, p. 568: *mi la lus chas ya ma zung du 'ong : bstan pa'i chos kyang ya ma zung du 'gro : dge rgyas bris pa'i ri mo shul rjes 'ong : khams kyi srin mo rdzong gsum gter ka 'di : mi bzhag 'don pa'i*

This brief passage appears to have been interpreted as a prophecy foretelling the arrival, in fact, of two *gter-stons* by the name of Nyi-ma-grags-pa.[19] The first, Khams-stod Dwags-po Gter-ston Nyi-ma-grags-pa, or as we shall call him, Nyi-ma-grags the Elder, may have lived during the thirteenth century. According to 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul, this *gter-ston* was the incarnation of Lha-lung Dpal-gyi-rdo-rje, the infamous monk-assassin of emperor Glang-dar-ma (c.803-842).[20] From the hidden valley (*sbas-yul*) of the threefold fortress of Srin-rdzong—Srin-po, Srin-mo, and Rdo-rje—Nyi-ma-grags the Elder extracted the *gter-ma* of the *Gshin-rje zla-gsang rol-pa* [*Play of Yamārāja-Guhyacandra*], the *Las-gshin sprel-slag-can* [*Karma-Yamā with Monkey-fur*], and the seven-part cycle of *Drag-sngags* [*Fierce Mantras*]. Curiously, Kong-sprul locates Srin-rdzong behind Sgam-po-gdar mountain in Dwags-po.[21] This identification is not fortuitous. Remember that Sgam-po-gdar is the very same site where Karma-gling-pa excavated the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. Like Karma-gling-pa, Nyi-ma-grags the Elder did not live for very long and sources for his biography are rather scarce. Furthermore, by the time 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul set out to compile the *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*, most of the Srin-rdzong *gter-mas* had been lost.

Although it is true that Nyi-ma-grags the Younger also extracted *gter-ma* from a place called Srin-mo-rdzong in Khams-stod, the two discoverers are clearly distinct individuals separated by several centuries. Still, the similarities between them cannot be ignored. I find it intriguing, for example, that both figures are reputed to have been fierce practitioners in possession of magical teachings associated with the wrathful forms of

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rtags der bstan nas byung : khams pa nyi ma grags kyi ming can 'byung. Cf. also GKCB, pp. 399 and 826; RCBP, fol. 410; Prats 1982, pp. 71 and 105:

[19]GKCB, p. 399.

[20]RCBP, fol. 411. On Dpal-gyi-rdo-rje, see Shakabpa 1984, p. 52; Richardson 1998, pp. 71 and 305.

[21]A location Kong-sprul places in Khams-stod, "upper" or "western" Khams. RCBP, fol. 411: *khams kyi srin mo rdzong zhes bya ba khams dwags po'i yul sgam po gdar gyi ri'i rgyab*. Turrell Wylie suggests that Khams-stod refers roughly to the region of Spo-bo. See Wylie 1962, pp. xxvii, 98 and 177n.578. However, according to Guru Bkra-shis, Srin-rdzong is in Cham, which must be near 'Bri-ru and Sog-rdzong, rather than Spo-bo.

Gshin-rje, Lord of the Dead. Murderous aggression is also said to be among the hallmarks of their personalities. Moreover, the fact that both are linked in some way to the *gter-ston* Karma-gling-pa suggests that some unifying theme of mythic proportion might be lurking behind the sinister details of all three of their lives. Unfortunately, if such a connection exists it is at present shrouded from view. But then again, perhaps we are just dealing with a Tibetan stereotype that portrays certain *gter-stons* as ferocious and demonic sorcerers, particularly those who "handled" (*phyag-tu son*) taboo scriptures tainted by the impurity of death. To be certain, an examination of the successive reincarnations of these visionaries would give us a clearer picture, albeit mainly symbolic or impressionistic, of how these personalities were actually viewed by later generations. With this in mind, let us continue the story of Nyi-ma-grags the Younger.

The former embodiments of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa are listed in Guru Bkra-shis from Nyi-ma's own text entitled *Klu'i-dbang-po'i skye-phreng* [*Garland of Lives of Klu'i-dbang-po*]. As the title makes clear, Nyi-ma-grags believed that he was fundamentally an incarnation of Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan, the eighth-century translator from Cog-ru.[22] It would be unnecessary to reproduce all of the lives given in this and other related works, but we should mention some of the more noteworthy. In Dwags-po, Nyi-ma-grags-pa is said to have taken birth as the consort of Karma-gling-pa.[23] This is our first indication that Nyi-ma-grags possessed some intimate connection to the teachings of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. Bear in mind that a *gter-ston* is generally expected to engage in certain sexual activities with a female consort, and that his union with this consort is designed to generate and re-awaken the original moment in which Padmasambhava had concealed the *gter-ma* in the mind of the *gter-ston's* past incarnation—in this case, Cog-ro Klu'i-dbang-

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[22]On whom, see Bradburn 1995, pp. 61-62. Remember that this eighth-century translator has also been identified as the previous embodiment of both Karma-gling-pa and Karma-chags-med. See Chapters 3 and 4.
[23]GKCB, p. 823.

po. Recall also that, in some of the biographies of Karma-gling-pa, the female partner who had been especially appointed for him by prophecy did not work out, since the auspicious connections linking them together had been fouled up (*'phyugs-pa*).[24] Consequently, Karma-gling-pa was forced to choose another woman, who it so happens bore him a son. The relationship is said to have aroused gossip among the people of Dwags-po. Which woman, then, was Nyi-ma-grags-pa supposed to have embodied? The good consort or the evil one? In both scenarios, the women are problematic. The "good" consort that never properly matched up with Karma-gling-pa was trouble because, although she was destined to be the special partner, she and the *gter-ston* could not, for whatever reason, make it work. Broken auspices are rarely viewed as productive in Tibet. The "other woman" was even more detrimental, since her unauthorized status became the cause of Karma-gling-pa's untimely demise. But, in the end, she gave birth to a son, presumably Nyi-zla-chos-rje, who carried on his father's legacy and helped to spread his teachings. So, it may be more fruitful to think of Nyi-ma-grags-pa as being formerly the "mother" of Nyi-zla-chos-rje, even though this would mean that he had been less than ladylike and had provoked the death of his partner Karma-gling-pa—yet somehow would that not seem oddly appropriate given his tarnished future reputation?

In another source, the title of which is not specified, Guru Bkra-shis relates that when Nyi-ma-grags-pa was residing at Kham-shag in Srin-rdzong he received a prophecy and sang a song about his previous lives—this would likely have been included in his *Mgur-'bum* [*Songs of Realization*] which has not yet surfaced. Apparently, in this song Nyi-ma-grags-pa states clearly that he had taken birth as the great siddha Nag-po-thog-'phen, the "Black Thunderbolt-Hurler", who was conceived in the region of Rgya-ston.[25] Much like the legend of Dga'-rab-rdo-rje (see Chapter 3), Nag-po-thog-'phen was born without an

[24]LGNB, fol. 40; TMLG, fol. 65a; NBDS, fol. 229; RCBP, fol. 537; GJGT, fol. 589.
[25]I have found no evidence suggesting that this siddha was an actual historical figure.

ordinary father. In a dream, his mother was "blessed" by Vajrapāṇi. When she gave birth to a child soon thereafter, she was dumb struck and threw the boy in a ravine. He was then nursed by vultures. After awhile, his mother began to see signs indicating that she had made a terrible mistake. She promptly retrieved her son and together they ran off to the predominantly Bon-po district of Khyung-po.[26] There the boy requested from a certain lama Khyung-sgam-po the initiations and instructions of Vajrapāṇi.[27] The child then had a vision and met personally with this deity.[28] The blessings he received from Vajrapāṇi gave him power over all ferocious gods and demons. A few illustrations are given. In the region of Shog-rdu-chu, there is said to be a certain tree where such gods and demons were known to reside. Fearlessly, Nag-po-thog-'phen cut this tree down and concealed inside its trunk three drums which had been made by the Karma Ḍākini-s. These would later be retrieved by Nyi-ma-grags-pa during one of his many *gter-ma* excavations.

In another episode, Nag-po-thog-'phen is called Nag-po-dgung-'phur-ba, the "Black Sky-Flyer", because he often soared through the sky wearing a black cloak. At Sog Sla-nga-dmar-po, a group of cannibal demons (*srin-po*), all of them brothers, had nested in the area and had begun feasting on human victims. A mother and her daughter pleaded with Nag-po-dgung-'phur-ba to help them. On the back of a vulture he flew to the peak of Brag Sla-nga-dmar-po and instantly killed (lit., "raised the status", *gnas-spar*) the demon brothers. His valiant actions saved the life-force (*srog*) of many beings. Afterwards, he took the daughter as his consort. From Rdo-rje-snying-rdzong, one of the three fortresses

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[26]The Khyung lineage, famous for its long line of Buddhist and Bon-po siddhas, was the family from which 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul's birth-father claimed descent. See Smith 1970, p. 28-29n.57. One of the most prominent figures of this clan was Khyung-po Rnal-'byor (1086-1135).

[27]Would this have been the *Phyag-na rdo-rje dbang-gi-rgyud*?

[28]Vajrapāṇi is understood to be inextricably linked to the rise to prominence of Vajrayāna Buddhism. See Snellgrove 1987, pp. 134-141. Nyi-ma-grags-pa's vision of this deity is perhaps symbolically significant in that it serves to authenticate his religious power by highlighting his intimate connection to the most powerful of Buddhist tantric deities.

of Srin-rdzong, he discovered the *Sring-mo-rdzong-gi gnas-yig* [*Pilgrimage Guide to Sring-mo-rdzong*], and from the palace of Yum-mtsho hundreds of cattle and livestock, which he used in his pastoral work. When he had plowed the fields at Chags-ri-kha (Char-ri),[29] he had angered the local spirits, who in retaliation hurled thunderbolts at him. Without much effort, he was able to catch the thunderbolts between the tips of his fingers and throw them back at the demons. The rocky mountain homes of these ferocious spirits were thus destroyed. Thereafter, he became known as Nag-po-thog-'phen, because he had tamed demons with thunderbolts and wrathful magic .

In a third episode it is related that a certain demon named Sog-'bom-mda'-ba failed to offer alms to Nag-po-thog-'phen. Offended, the siddha literally cut out Sog-'bom-mda'-ba's land from the earth and moved it somewhere else. Guru Bkra-shis proclaims that in his day there was still an impression in the ground where this took place. Again, Nag-po-thog-'phen was also called Nag-po-khrag-skyugs, the "Black Blood-Vomiter",[30] because he often vomited blood whenever he performed miracles or "liberated" hostile demons. His descendants are said to have resided at the siddha's three main seats—the monasteries of Nem-tshar Spangs-lcin[-lcib?] and Ba-dan, and Ka-'og-sngags-grong. So far I have traced no information about these institutions, although the name "ka-'og-sngags" is mentioned by Ramon Prats in reference to a community of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's followers. Prats relates that, at Char-ri (Chags-ru, Chags-ri), which is claimed to be in 'Dzin-pa near Sde-dge,[31] the *gter-ston*'s disciples, who were renowned sorcerers, were popularly called "exorcists under the *ka*" (*ka-'og-sngags-pa*)—a title alluding to the configuration of the mountains that encircled the village at Char-ri, a shape that resembled the first letter of the

[29]Chags-ri-kha (Char-ri) should be identical with Chags-ru, a sacred site near Srin-rdzong.
[30]Was this the disciple of Rang-'byung-rdo-rje (1284-1339)? See Roerich 1949, p. 517. A certain Rtogs-ldan Khrag-skyugs, abbot of Nag-phu, is mentioned briefly in LRCB, p. 293, but it is not clear whether the two are related.
[31]Smith 1979.

Tibetan alphabet.[32] Prats does not clarify whether this phrase referred to the name of a previous religious community in that area.

What, we may ask, do these strange and colorful stories tell us about the historical figure of Nyi-ma-grags-pa? There are two answers that seem appropriate. First, the tales of the siddha Nag-po-'thog-phen may have served as a compelling way to illustrate, as well as to justify, certain prominent features of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's complex personality. From these legends, we learn that Nag-po-'thog-phen was of semi-divine origin and had been raised partially by vultures—wild birds of prey noted for their savagery. His first encounter with a religious figure took place in Khyung-po, a famous Bon-po stronghold and home of Khyung-po Rnal-'byor (1086-1135), founder of the Shangs-pa Bka'-brgyud sect.[33] He, therefore, might have had early Bon-po associations, and possibly an early yogic training. As a siddha, through divine encounters with Vajrapāṇi, he developed special powers that gave him the ability to control and subjugate demons, which he was often called upon to do. He was active in the hidden valley of Srin-rdzong (also Sring-rdzong) as an exorcist and revealer of *gter-ma*. His wrath was obstinate and vengeful, but oddly compassionate. In the end, Nag-po-'thog-phen was shown to be a benevolent miracle-worker and a leader of monks. As we shall see, all of these traits without exception were also attributed to the figure of Nyi-ma-grags-pa. Secondly, these stories reflect the strong spiritual connection that existed between Nyi-ma-grags, Chags-ri, and the three hidden fortresses of Srin-mo-rdzongs. The discovery by Nag-po-thog-'phen of the *Sring-mo-rdzong-gi gnas-yig* served to foreshadow, and even validate, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's own efforts to open a pilgrimage path at Srin-rdzong-gnas in 1704. So, in

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[32]Prats 1982, p. 74.
[33]See Roerich 1949, chap. 9; Kapstein 1980 and 1991.

general, these stories about Nyi-ma-grags-pa's former rebirths might have been intended to introduce a certain credibility to his powerful historical persona.

Among some of the other notable reincarnations that clearly say something of his character, we should mention the names of Kaḥ-thog-pa Maṇi-rin-chen of Bu-'bor-sgang,[34] Mnga'-bdag Kun-dga'-lhun-'grub, the eleventh patriarch of the family of Nyang-ral,[35] the great scholar Bo-dong Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (alias Paṇ-chen 'Jigs-med-grags-pa, 1375-1451),[36] and 'Bri-gung 'Pho-lung-pa Karma-bsam-grub of Bar-khams, master of the *Khros-ma nag-mo* [*Black Wrathful Goddess*]. This last figure immediately preceded Nyi-ma-grags-pa and belonged to the clan of his ancestry. All we are told about him is that he completed one hundred million recitations of the *Khros-ma nag-mo* by himself without assistance,[37] and that he became expert in the practice of the "transference-transmission" (*'pho-lung*), which earned him his name. It would appear that 'Pho-lung-pa was active in the area of Cham (Cham-da ? near 'Bri-ru), where it seems he once miraculously revived a dead deer by calling her consciousness back into her corpse. Later, at Na-bun-rdzong he left his footprint in stone. With 'Pho-lung-pa the list of previous births is complete.

In the Nang-chen region where Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa was born there was a tantric practitioner named lama 'Khrul-zhig-chen-po, a disciple of 'Pho-lung-pa. Perceiving something quite special in the infant Nyi-ma, the tantrika asked him point blank: "O dear son who are you? What do you have to say for yourself?" The boy

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[34]One of the four students of Kaḥ-dam-pa Bde-gshegs (1122-1192), founder of Kaḥ-thog monastery (1159). See GLKT, pp. 41-42.
[35]GKCB, p. 652.
[36]On whom see Smith 1970b, p. 8. Bo-dong was apparently a rather arrogant and combative scholar. See comments in Mullin 1996, pp. 104-105.
[37]Literally, "with his own tongue" (*ljags thog-nas songs*). In Tibet it was quite common to arrange to have people "sit-in" for one's program of recitation in order to more quickly and easily accomplish the requisite number of repetitions.

responded: "I am 'Pho-lung-pa Karma-bsam-'grub!", at which point, 'Khrul-zhig-chen-po recognized the little boy as his teacher's reincarnation.[38] Nyi-ma-grags-pa then proceeded to extract the treasure *Rdo'i-khro phur-'dra-ba* [*Like a Wrathful Stone Dagger*], which he presented to his father, Byams-me Dbon-po Karma-rnam-rgyal.

Nyi-ma's father and grandfather were faithful adherents of the 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud tradition, and so at the proper age he was sent to his uncle's Bka'-brgyud monastery. There he received the refuge vows and the name Karma-'phrin-las. From one lama Spyi-bug-pa Karma-byang-chub he received the *Maṇi-bka'-'bum* [*Collected Teachings of Maṇi*], the *Rje-btsun mi-la'i rnam-thar* [*Biography of Rje-btsun Milarepa*], and the "reading" (*lung*) of the *Sdom-btsun-ma* [*Queen's Precepts*]. He also received a second name, Karma Mi-pham-'phrin-las-rgya-mtsho. His uncle taught him Bu-ston's *Chos-'byung* and the ritual cycles of the 'Brug-pa tradition. He then returned home to his father.

At a very young age, Nyi-ma had begun to have visions of Padmasambhava and developed an early interest in the Rnying-ma-pa school. While at his uncle's monastery he was disheartened to find that the name of this great saint was rarely uttered and that his activities were never discussed. After his return, Nyi-ma-grags-pa complained to his father and pleaded to be allowed to study with a Rnying-ma teacher. His father and older brother recommended the name of a lama in Nang-chen and suggested that he go and visit with him. This teacher was Rdzogs-chen Padma-rig-'dzin, a nephew of Dpal-yul Kun-bzang-shes-rab, who had recently been invited to the area by the king of Nang-chen. At that time, the king had also invited Karma-chags-med. Nyi-ma-grags-pa met both lamas and received teachings from them, but it was Padma-rig-'dzin who really impressed him

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[38]GKCB, p. 828: *sngags 'chang des bu khyod su yin ci skad smra rgyu yod ces zer ba na bdag ni 'pho lung pa karma bsam 'grub yin no zhes sogs gsungs pas kun ha las te bu chung 'dis da lta nas skad cha 'phros pa ngo mtshar che zhes gleng / sngags 'chang de dad pas mchi ma 'khrug cing phyag dtsal nas rang gi bla ma'i sku'i skye bar 'dug pas sku tshe la bar chad ma byung ba dgos 'dug gsungs nas dga' ston tshogs 'khor mdzad.*

most. It is even claimed that Nyi-ma knew at that very moment that this teacher had been his chief mentor in all of his past series of lives (*tshe-rabs-kyi bla-ma*), and that he would again become such a central figure in his present life.

Not long after, Nyi-ma-grags-pa met *gter-chen* Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje of Sde-dge when the latter was visiting Shar-yi-phug. Padma-rig-'dzin asked Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje whether Nyi-ma was actually the reincarnation of 'Pho-lung-pa Karma-bsam-'grub. The elder *gter-ston* responded without hesitation that the young boy was unmistakably the rebirth of this great siddha. Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje even acknowledged, moreover, that Nyi-ma-grags-pa was the "doctrine-master" (*chos-bdag*) of his own *Phur-ba* [*Dagger*] treasures.[39] He requested that the young boy come visit him again after three or fours years when he had properly matured. In the company of Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje, Nyi-ma underwent the tonsure ceremony and received his first Rnying-ma-pa name, O-rgyan Rig-'dzin-rnam-rgyal. From Padma-rig-'dzin, he then received layman's vows and a second name, O-rgyan Rig-'dzin-rgya-mtsho. Then, in 1664, at the age of sixteen, Nyi-ma-grags-pa accompanied his teacher to Lhasa. The trip was the first of several key visits to central Tibet.

It was fortuitous that Nyi-ma-grags-pa met these three important lamas early in life, especially *gter-chen* Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje. This was a lama of impressive stature in eastern Tibet during the second half of the seventeenth century. He was well-connected to all the major Rnying-ma monasteries in that region and had cultivated close ties with the rulers of Sde-dge and Gling-tshang. In Sde-dge his most influential patron was Bla-chen Byams-pa-phun-tshogs, a direct descendant of Sde-dge's ruling house who was both a clever statesman and resourceful cleric.[40] With the support of such high-ranking patrons, Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje was able to carry out a number of important projects like the renovation

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[39]On the tradition of the *phur-ba* in Tibetan history, see particularly Mayer 1990 and 1991; Boord 1993.
[40]See Kolmaś 1968, pp. 33-34.

of Kaḥ-thog monastery and the construction of his own religious center in Sde-dge.[41] It is probably significant that Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje took such a liking to Nyi-ma-grags-pa. The connections they cultivated early on likely opened doors for the young *gter-ston* in later years, especially in Gling-tshang and Sde-dge where he would come to wield considerable influence at the royal courts and with Byams-pa-phun-tshogs's principal successors at the family monastery of Lhun-sgrub-steng.

For five years beginning in 1664, Nyi-ma-grags-pa traveled throughout much of central Tibet establishing connections with a number of important lamas. At Bsam-yas in 1665, he met the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje, who had been visiting the area.[42] This great lama from Lha-lung monastery bestowed upon Nyi-ma-grags-pa, among other instructions, the *Tshe-sgrub* [*Longevity Practices*] of Padma-gling-pa. We cannot be sure at this stage whether the Gsung-sprul also granted his young student initiation into Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* cycle. Again we must keep in mind that the successors of Padma-gling-pa's tradition at Lha-lung held the special *Bar-do thos-grol* transmission and that Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje had earlier been responsible for calligraphing a manuscript edition of that collection. Could it have been perhaps at Lha-lung sometime after his meeting with the Gsung-sprul in Lhasa that Nyi-ma-grags-pa first received the *Bar-do thos-grol* from O-rgyan Rig-'dzin-chos-rgyal, Padma-gling-pa's grandson/nephew? The answer is not clear, although we do know that it was actually at Bsam-yas, rather than Lha-lung, that Nyi-ma-grags-pa compiled his Kar-gling *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*.[43] Unfortunately, the texts do not specify exactly when this might have occurred.

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[41]GLKT, pp. 86-88; GKCB, pp. 566-570.

[42]On whom see Chapter 4.

[43]The precise location is indicated as Bdud-'dul-sngags-pa-gling, a tantric chapel southeast of the southern Aryapalo temple (devoted to Hayagriva) at Bsam-yas: *gsol 'debs kyi rim pa 'di sprul pa'i gter ston rigs 'dzin nyi ma grags pas bdud 'dul sngags pa gling du sbyar ba 'di yang zad mi shes pa gang*

During these years, Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa studied with the great teachers of central and southern Tibet, including Zhabs-drung Padma-'phrin-las of Rdo-rje-brag (1641-1718).[44] Nyi-ma-grags-pa also visited some of the major religious institutions of that region, such as Smra-ba-cog, Guru Lha-khang, Mkhar-chu Bdud-'joms-gling, and 'Phyong-rgyas Dpal-ri Theg-chen-gling.[45] At these sites, he received the principal teachings of such luminaries as Nyang-ral Nyi-ma-'od-zer (1136-1204), Guru Chos-dbang (1212-1270), Klong-chen-pa, O-rgyan-gling-pa (c.1323-1360), and Sangs-rgyas-gling-pa (1340-1396). Finally, in 1668, Nyi-ma met up again with his root lama, Padma-rig-'dzin, and together they traveled to Tsa-ri on pilgrimage. Here, in the isolated hidden valley of Zab-lam Rdo-rje'i-ra-ba, Padma-rig-'dzin entered strict retreat for three years. Nyi-ma-grags-pa joined him and began his yogic training. Often, he would have to leave Tsa-ri in search of provisions. It was during these times that he first began giving religious instruction in exchange for valuable goods and worldly commodities. From the retreat site, he would travel to Dwags-po and Kong-po and receive huge and expensive offerings from the pious locals. This is our first indication of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's charismatic ability to arouse the faith of the masses and to charm them into heaping lavish gifts upon he and his followers. It would appear that he often had a difficult time maintaining his humility in the face of such bountiful adulation. We shall see that Nyi-ma's pride became a source of conflict between he and and his teacher Padma-rig-'dzin as well as, we might add, his potential rivals.

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gā'i rgyun ltar yun ring gnas par gyur cig // sarvamaṅgalam. See, for example, B1, fols. 201.5-202.2; DH, fols. 465.5-466.2. On this chapel, see Dorje 1996, p. 242.

[44]From this lama, Nyi-ma-grags-pa received the "Northen Treasures" (*byang-gter*) teachings of Rdo-rje-brag. On the life of Padma-'phrin-las, see BDTT, vol. 4, pp. 348-358; GKCB, pp. 682-685; Bradburn 1995, pp. 266-268.

[45]These important Rnying-ma-pa institutions are discussed briefly in GKCB, pp. 649-653 (Smra-ba-cog, founded by Nyang-ral Nyi-ma-'od-zer, 1136-1204); p. 653 (Mkhar-chu, established by the fifth Dalai Lama, 1617-1682); pp. 653-664 (Guru Lha-khang, founded by Guru Chos-dbang, 1212-1270); p. 668 ('Phyongs-rgyas Dpal-ri, monastic headquarters of *gter-ston* Shes-rab-'od-zer, 1517-1584).

In 1669, Nyi-ma-grags-pa had his second vision of Padmasambhava and received a *gter-ma* prophecy from him. While circumambulating Zhing-skyong Gha-ya-rda-ra's Lake of Purple Blood (*dmar-nag-rakta*), he saw smoke rising from a boulder on the shore of the lake. He approached the smouldering rock and pushed a staff through it. In Tibet, piercing stones with sticks is an image traditionally associated with the subjugation of demons.[46] From the stone he extracted his first *kha-byang*, "entrance-certificate"—a list of hiding places—and three yellow scrolls (*gser shog-dril*). His excitement was such that Padma-rig-'dzin was forced to reprimand him. For the next several years, Nyi-ma-grags-pa had many more experiences of this extraordinary sort. His special status as a *gter-ston* and conqueror of demons was now quite apparent.

From approximately 1671 to 1674, Nyi-ma-grags-pa remained in retreat at Dpal-gyi-kham-shag Rdo-rje-snying-rdzong, one of the three fortresses of Srin-mo. There he is said to have had a third vision of Padmasambhava and to have encountered a host of dangerous non-human spirits, which he was able to subdue through his yogic powers. These demons became his slaves, subservient to his every wish. Soon thereafter, he received word from Padma-rig-'dzin requesting that he come to Gtsang.

On his journey west, Nyi-ma-grags-pa stopped again at Bsam-yas. The monastery had been severely damaged by fire and a restoration project had been launched. To help fund the effort, Nyi-ma-grags-pa offered all of his wealth of materials that he had gathered from devotees along the way. Then, in Lhasa he made offerings to the fifth Dalai Lama. We must assume that this had been the beginning of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's favor and support among some of the preeminent leaders of Lhasa. He would eventually meet the young sixth Dalai Lama and develop a sort of patron-priest (*mchod-yon*) relationship, albeit somewhat strained, with the acting regent Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho.

[46]Dowman 1997, p. 25.

Nyi-ma arrived in Gtsang by way of Gnam-mtsho, a popular pilgrimage site (favored especially by Bon-pos and Rnying-ma-pas) north of the Gnyan-chen-thang-lha mountain range.[47] He reunited with Padma-rig-'dzin at the monastery of Bres-dgon-gsar in 'Bras-yul (near Gong-ra and Sde-skyid-gling). There, from Bres-pa 'Jam-dbyang-chos-rgyal-rdo-rje of Sikkim (1602-1677) and his son Nyi-zla-klong-gsal, he received Rdzogs-chen instruction and the *gter-ma* of Bstan-gnyis-gling-pa.[48] Later, during Nyi-ma-grags-pa's second visit to 'Bras-yul, 'Jam-dbyang-chos-rgyal-rdo-rje would offer him the entire monastery of Bres-dgon as dedication for his introducing them to the *gter-ma* doctrines of Mnga'-ris Padma Gar-dbang-rtsal (alias Gar-dbang-rdo-rje), with whom Nyi-ma-grags would share a close personal connection (see below). Nyi-zla-klong-gsal's own son and chief disciple, Kun-mkhyen Chos-dbang-rdo-rje-'dzin-pa, would later be recognized as the reincarnation of *gter-ston* Gar-dbang-rdo-rje.[49]

In 1675, Nyi-ma-grags-pa and Padma-rig-'dzin went on pilgrimage to Mount Kailash, where Nyi-ma performed several miracles.[50] From Kailash, the two traveled further west to Mnga'-ris. It was here that Nyi-ma-grags-pa first met *gter-ston* Gar-dbang-rdo-rje. The latter presented his own *gter-ma* texts to Nyi-ma and admonished that he wait one year before opening their seal. In the meantime, Nyi-ma-grags-pa traveled on

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[47]According to John Vincent Bellezza, the "geomantic heart" of Gnam-mtsho is an island known as Srin-mo-do (also Sri-mo-do, Se-mo-do, and Nang-do) situated at the northwestern tip of the lake. Referring to the third Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho's pilgrimage guide to that area, Bellezza mentions a curious legend about Karma-gling-pa and a black stone that contained "a white clockwise hand spiral". He had received this from some unnamed person at the Dga'-ba-tshal cemetery at Srin-mo-do. See Bellezza 1997, p. 159, and 161-162. Bellezza seems to have slightly embellished the passage, which reads literally: "In north Gnam-mtsho at Bya-dur [Bya-do] the siddha Karma-gling-pa extracted treasure from a sky-stone, [including] a small pearl conch that spiraled to the right." (*grub thob karma gling pas byang gnam mtsho'i bya dur nam mkha' do nas gter bzhes pa mu tig dung g.yas 'khyil chung*, SITU, fol. 492.1-2). The precious right-turning conch shell is one of eight traditional auspicious symbols (*bkra-shis rtags-brgyad*), evoking the fame of the Buddha's teaching. The details surrounding this story of Karma-gling-pa's discovery unfortunately are not elucidated, but perhaps Nyi-ma-grags-pa had some hand in its embellishment. We must await more complete information before this legend can be critically examined. On the Gnam-mtsho region, see also Dowman 1997, p. 260. A brief account of Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho's life can be found in GLKT, pp. 115-125.

[48]On whom see Bradburn 1995, pp. 200-201.

[49]See Bradburn 1995, p. 266.

[50]Such as leaving his footprint at Sgrol-ma-la-kha.

pilgrimage to Nepal and visited the sacred places at Swayambunath and the Kathmandu Valley.

Upon his return to Mnga'-ris, he exchanged teachings with Guru Sākya-bdud-'dul, Rgyal-thang-pa Ngag-dbang-zil-gnon-rdo-rje, and Gar-dbang-rdo-rje. It is not specified whether the *Bar-do thos-grol* was among the teachings that Nyi-ma presented to these teachers, but it is clear that he had by this point become recognized as one of the chief holders of the Kar-gling transmission. This fact is corroborated by Guru Bkra-shis in his description of an intriguing episode that took place sometime around 1676 involving Nyi-ma-grags-pa and Gar-dbang-rdo-rje. According to the story, the *gter-ston* from Mnga'-ris granted Nyi-ma the detailed initiations, readings, and sādhana-s of his *Rdor-sems thugs-kyi me-long* [*Mirror of the Enlightened Mind of Vajrasattva*],[51] *Padma'i snyan-brgyud yang-gsang bla-med* [*Unsurpassable Innermost Oral Lineage of Padmasambhava*],[52] and *Thugs-rje chen-po rtsa-gsum snying-thig* [*Mahākarūṇa, the Seminal Heart of the Three Roots*].[53] During this transmission, Gar-dbang-rdo-rje recounted a recent dream about Nyi-ma-grags-pa:

> "When you were coming here I had a pure vision that I discovered two thunderbolt-daggers (*gnam-lcags phur-pa*) and a skull-cup (*kapāla*) filled with wine. When I drank half of the wine I saw inside the skull-cup the blazing splendor of the five families of blood-drinking deities. This means that you have

[51]This is extant in a separate volume as *Rdo-rje sems-dpa' thugs-kyi me-long* (Dalhousie, H.P: Damchoe Sangpo, 1984. I-Tib-2573). Here, it may be worth mentioning Martin Boord's comment that at Rdo-rje-brag monastery "during the third month, five days are devoted after the first half-moon to the *Zhi khro* cycle of Karma gling-pa and at the end of the month the *maṇḍala* of Gar-dbang rdor-sems is constructed in accordance with the text *Thugs kyi me long*". See Boord 1993, p. 32. I presume that this title is a reference to the *Rdor-sems thugs-kyi me-long* of Gar-dbang-rdo-rje and that the Kar-gling tradition observed at Rdo-rje-brag was the one received through Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. It would seem to be more than just coincedence that the *Thugs-kyi me-long* and Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro* cycle would have been joined together in the same month of the monastery's ritual calendar.

[52]RCTD, vol. 12, pp. 363-380 and 385-434.

[53]RCTD, vol. 38, pp. 1-52 (nos. 1-3).

> achieved the great power of the fierce mantras (*drag-sngags*).[54] You particularly hold the special authorized transmission of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, and so [with these teachings] you must work for the benefit of all beings. Moreover, from this point on your previous aspiration to benefit the beings of the six regions of Mdo-khams has come together and so you are specially authorized to bring benefit to them, as well. Consequently, I have great hope in you, so use your generated *bodhicitta* for the benefit of beings. From among my own *gter-ma* teachings, you are the chief doctrine-master of the *Padma'i snyan-brgyud*."[55]

After this, Gar-dbang-rdo-rje enthroned Nyi-ma-grags-pa as a "Vajra King" (*rdo-rje gyal-po*) and granted him many offerings. He invited Nyi-ma to visit him again and promised that at that time he would give him the "inside scoop" (*nang-gtsang-gi gsung nang-ma*), as it were, presumably in regards to Gar-dbang-rdo-rje's own doctrines. This brief account of the meeting between these two lamas says much about how Nyi-ma-grags-pa was viewed not only by Gar-dbang-rdo-rje but also by his contemporaries; that is, as a master of "fierce mantras", an accomplished exorcist. The dream, moreover, provides us with another key indication of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's close connection to the *gter-ma* of Karma-gling-pa. Recall that Nyi-ma-grags was believed to have previously taken birth in Dwags-po as Karma-gling-pa's consort. For reasons not made clear—but certainly due to some prior connections in Nyi-ma-grags-pa's own life—Gar-dbang-rdo-

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[54]Generally speaking, wrathful mantras are employed as tools of exorcism to dispel demons (*bdud-bzlog*). See Beyer 1978, pp. 231-245.

[55]GKCB, pp. 837-838: *de skabs gter chen de nyid kyis khyod 'dir phebs dus mtshan lam du gnam lcags kyi phur pa gnyis rnyed pa dang / chang ka pā la gang 'dug pa la hub gcig brgyab pa phyed la song tshe / ka pā la'i nang khrag 'thung rigs lnga gzi brjid lam lam 'dug pa sogs kyi dag snang byung bas / khyod drag sngags kyi nus pa chen po thon pa zhig yin pa gda' / khyad par du zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi 'gro don bka' babs khyod la yod pas 'gro don la rem gsungs pa dang* [p.838] *da ltar gyi mi thog 'di la mdo khams sgang drug gi 'gro ba la smon lam gyis mtshams sbyor 'gro don gyi bka' babs khyod la yod pas nga khyod la re che bas 'gro don la sems bskyed rgya ma chung zhig ces dang / nga'i gter kha 'di rnams kyi nang nas padma'i snyan brgyud kyi rtsa ba'i chos bdag khyod yin gsungs.*

rje had felt that Nyi-ma was particularly qualified to transmit the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*. It seems likely that the latter had already been familiar with these teachings, and may even had begun transmitting them to others. I believe, based on circumstantial evidence both in Guru Bkra-shis and in certain lineage records, that Nyi-ma-grags-pa had probably received the Kar-gling transmissions about a decade prior to his first meeting with Gar-dbang-rdo-rje, while he was traveling through Lho-brag around 1665. In the years leading up to his meeting with the Mnga'-ris *gter-ston*, Nyi-ma-grags-pa must have bestowed the Kar-gling initiations and instructions upon many of the lamas he encountered during his extensive travels throughout Dbus and Gtsang. By the time he met again with Gar-dbang-rdo-rje to receive that lama's own teachings, Nyi-ma-grags-pa had established himself as a principal holder of the Kar-gling transmission. Indeed, this must surely be the reason behind Gar-dbang-rdo-rje's pronouncement of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's special connection to the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. His legacy in this regard has continued even down to the present. Again we should bear in mind that it was Nyi-ma-grags-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol* that was immortalized throughout America and Europe as the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

Nyi-ma-grags remained quite active in Gtsang and Mnga'-ris for several years. In 1676, he traveled to the region of Mang-yul north of Mu-stang. From a temple called Byams-sprin he discovered the *Thugs-rje chen-po ma-rig mun-sel* [*Mahākarūṇa, Dispelling the Darkness of Ignorance*]. This *gter-ma* contained an extremely short piece entitled *Thos-grol tshor-ba rang-grol* [*Liberation upon Hearing, the Self-Liberation of Feeling*]—one of only a few texts by Nyi-ma-grags-pa that I have been able to locate. We know this text from Nyi-ma's own redaction of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. In that collection, we find that he had appended the text to the end of Karma-gling-pa's *Bar-do'i smon-lam*

'jigs-skyobs-ma.[56] We may recall that this belongs to a set of bardo prayers which have been uniformly grouped together and incorporated into almost every edition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol*. The verses of some of these prayers, including the *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma*, can be found embedded in the body of a few of the more elaborate works, such the *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol* and the *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs*. I have argued previously that at one time the bardo prayers constituted the very core of the *thos-grol* teachings, and that the more expansive texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol* were in fact derived originally from them. The collective aim of these prayers was, and still is, to provide assistance to the deceased who is believed to be suffering from fear and anxiety in the bardo between lives. Appropriately, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's brief appendix to the *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma* contains a mantra given by Padmasambhava which needs only to be heard in order to secure a favorable rebirth.[57] The apparent intention on Nyi-ma-grags-pa's part in attaching this additional piece to the Kar-gling prayer was thus to help fulfill the customary and well-established goal of ensuring for the dead a safe and successful journey upward.

According to its colophon, Nyi-ma-grags-pa transcribed the yellow scrolls for the *Thos-grol tshor-ba rang-grol* (and presumably the entire *Ma-rig mun-sel* itself) in the sixth month of the iron-monkey year 1680 at Padmasambhava's Black Cave (*phug-nag*) at Srin-mo-rdzong.[58] From Guru Bkra-shis we learn that this was the Black Cave of Chags-ru and that it was also a sacred site of one Grub-chen Nag-po-rdo-rje.[59] It was

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[56]B1, fols. 128-130; B2, fols. 134b.6-135b.2; B4; DH, fols. 319-321; T3.

[57]*oṃ ā : hūṃ hri : oṃ maṇi pad me hūṃ : oṃ vairocana hūṃ : akṣobhya : ratnasaṃbhava : amidheva : amoghasiddhi hūṃ : padma ha mahā amoghapaśa : saha ām samaya hri am cara cara hūṃ : namo bhagavat ārya avalokeśvaraya : bhodhisatvaya : mahāsatvaya : mahākarunikaya : siddhimanṭaya āni svāhā.*

[58]*bdag khams pa nyi ma grags pas mang yul byams sprin gyi gtsug lag khang nas gdan drangs shing : khams sring mo rdzong gi phug nag o rgyan sgrub gnas su shogs ser las lcags spre hor zla drug par zhal bzhus pa'o.*

[59]GKCB, p. 839. I have found no information about this individual.

here that Nyi-ma-grags-pa entered into strict retreat for three years beginning in 1678. At the end of that period, he is said to have excavated three cycles of *gter-ma* and several multiplying buddha relics (*sangs-rgyas 'phel-gdung*).[60] In later years, he instituted the liturgies of two of these Srin-rdzong treasures as central practices at monasteries in Mi-nyag and Sde-dge. At Ri-khud-dgon in Mi-nyag, he initiated the practice of the *Thugs-rje chen-po ma-rig mun-sel* and personally taught the monks how to perform the proper dances, chants, and ritual procedures. In Sde-dge, he and king Bstan-pa-tshe-ring instituted the liturgy of the *Zab-khrid phag-mo khros-ma* [*Profound Instructions on Wrathful Varāhi*] at Nyi-ma-grags-pa's main monastery of Stag-mo-sgang.[61]

I have mentioned these details in order to make two important points. First, I wish to stress that Nyi-ma-grags-pa's own *gter-ma* cycles were clearly accepted in many parts of Tibet, particularly in Khams, and were even influential enough to be incorporated as liturgical centerpieces at major ecclesiastic institutions. This runs counter to what we might expect if we accepted at face value the implications raised by the conspicuous absence of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's work in such authoritative sources as the *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*. We have already considered some of the reasons behind this inadequate representation. Secondly, it is apparent that between the years 1678 and 1680, Nyi-ma-grags-pa was actively composing and transcribing original doctrinal and liturgical works. It is conceivable that at this time he was also editing the teachings of other religious figures that he had received while traveling throughout Tibet. In particular, I want to suggest tentatively that in this period he may have begun collating the texts of the *Bar-do*

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[60]These were the *Zab-khrid phag-mo khros-ma*, the *Phur-pa hūṃ-chen sgra-sgrogs ma-bu*, and the *Nor-bdag rnam-sras*. Unfortunately Nyi-ma-grags-pa was not able to recover all of the teachings of the latter because his consort was impure. As an even more dramatic sign of corrupted auspices, it was also rumored that the particular site where this treasure had been discovered was later blown apart by lightning.

[61]Guru Bkra-shis comments, however, that after their death the *Khros-ma* practice was not continued at Stag-mo-sgang because the succeeding abbots were confused about how to perform it properly. See GKCB, p. 849.

thos-grol. As we noted above, he eventually appended his own *Thos-grol tshor-ba rang-grol* (transcribed in 1680) to one of Karma-gling-pa's principal bardo prayers. The question, however, is when precisely this was accomplished. If, in fact, he had begun to redact the Kar-gling texts sometime between 1678 and 1680, then I would imagine that he did not finalize their arrangement until much later. Most likely, the full redaction of the *Bar-do thos-grol* took place towards the end of his life, when, according to Guru Bkra-shis, he had settled down at Stag-mo-sgang and begun to compile textbooks on the topics of tantric meditation and ritual performance.[62]

The actual content and textual sequence of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol* collection is known from modern facsimiles of several xylograph prints from different historical and geographical origins (see survey at the conclusion of this chapter). It is regrettable that at this stage an original manuscript or blockprint of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's redaction has not yet been discovered. We thus cannot make the necessary critical comparisons between the earliest and more recent versions of this textual tradition. Based on the uniformity of the later editions, however, we can safely argue that this *Bar-do thos-grol* tradition consisted essentially of the core set of texts discussed in Chapter 2, including the requisite bardo prayers, the famous *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, and the fundamental *Zhi-khro* sādhana *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*. The most distinctive feature of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's edition is organizational. In each representative edition of the Nyi-grags redaction the fundamental works are invariably placed in the following order:[63]

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[62]In the colophon of his *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*, however, Nyi-ma-grags-pa states that he had compiled the text at Bdud-'dul sngags-pa-gling, a chapel attached to the southern part of Bsam-yas. See note 43 above. It is thus likely that he pieced together the *Bar-do thos-grol* collection over an extended period of time.

[63]The list presented here is based on the sequence found in edtion T3, which is explicitly identified as Nyi-ma-grags-pa's adaptation.

1. *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs*
2. *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa*
3. *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*
4. *Bar-do'i rtsa-tshig*
5. *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*
6. *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*

We do not find this particular textual sequence in the other *Bar-do thos-grol* editions (not even in the closely related Lha-lung manuscript recovered by Waddell), which suggests that the arrangement is unique to the tradition associated with Nyi-ma-grags-pa. We can discern a certain conceptual logic in this arrangement. The materials are arranged in continuous sequence to lead from the ceremonies accompanying the moment of dying to those for the journey in the bardo after death and then to those for guidance into the next rebirth. In accordance with the customary doctrines of the Rdzogs-chen tradition, these Kar-gling texts describe the final moment of the dying process as marked by the sudden and dramatic appearance of the fundamental radiance of reality-itself (*chos-nyid*). To those who fail to recognize this luminosity at death visions begin to emerge of a mandala of forty-two peaceful deities (Text 1). On the fourteenth day, this peaceful mandala dissolves into the mandala of fifty-eight wrathful deities (Text 2). The deceased awakens to these visions confused and frightened. Prayers are recited as humble petitions for comfort and security (Text 3), for remembering important religious instruction (Text 4), and for guidance through the perilous pathways of the bardo realm (Text 5). After the visions of deities have subsided, the deceased acquires a mental body (*yid-kyi lus*) complete with all five senses and begins the descent to a new birth (Text 6).

In addition to the core texts listed above, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol* also included the following titles, which can be found in the order below:

7. *Btags-grol phung-po rang-grol*
8. *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma*
9. *'Chi-ltas mtshan-ma rang-grol*
10. *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol*
11. *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i gdams-pa srid-pa bar-do rang-grol*
12. *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i lhan-thabs*
13. *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*
14. *'Chi-bslu 'jigs-pa rang-grol*
15. *Zhi-khro'i klong-bshags brjod-pa rang-grol*
16. *Btags-grol yid-bzhin nor-mchog*
17. *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*

Here we find emphasis on the purification of the sins of the departed through ritual actions and prayers devised to follow the deceased through the extended process of purification in the bardo and incorporation into a new existence. Specifically, the texts include cleansing mantras to be worn on the body (Texts 7/16), a prayer for protection against fear (Text 8), omens of impending doom and death ransoms (Texts 9/14), a philosophical introduction to the nature of awareness (Text 10), stories of postmortem judgement (Texts 11/12), a lineage supplication (Text 13), and the *Zhi-khro* sādhana-s (Texts 15/17). The entire volume thus presents a clearly organized and complete program for the performance of the Kar-gling funeral liturgy. Although we cannot be certain, this collection must surely reflect the unique perspective of its compiler. Ostensibly, Nyi-ma-grags-pa carefully prepared this particular sequence of texts in accordance with the

perceived requirements of his religious community. What precisely those needs and interests might have been is, unfortunately, a question that for now must remain unanswered.

Sometime around 1682, Nyi-ma-grags-pa traveled south towards India. Guru Bkra-shis remarks that at that time there was trouble in the region of Mon (on the border of Bhutan) between followers of the Dge-lugs-pa in Lhasa and the 'Brug-pa Bka'-brgyud in Bhutan.[64] Consequently, Nyi-ma-grags-pa encountered some difficulty crossing through that area, but apparently through charm and graciousness he was able to finagle his way into India. He remained there for a year or more extracting various *gter-ma*[65] before traveling back through Bhutan in 1684.

The details of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's visit to Bhutan are not elucidated, although we do know that he spent some time in the eastern district of Bkra-shis-sgang. In the biography of the Bhutanese monk Se'u-la Byams-mgon Ngag-dbang-rgyal-mtshan (1647-1732), we learn that while living in Sde-dge as a kind of official ambassador (between 1688 and 1695), Ngag-dbang-rgyal-mtshan met briefly with Nyi-ma-grags-pa.[66] This Bhutanese monk had earlier observed at Pho-brang Snum-mda' the rituals of the *Thugs-rje chen-po ma-rig mun-sel* from Nyi-ma-grags-pa's fifteen volume collection of *gter-ma*.[67] At their

[64]According to John Ardussi, Bhutan and Tibet were technically at peace at this time, since a treaty was signed in 1679. However, there was still a great deal of friction along the borders (e-mail communication of February 8, 1999); cf. also Ardussi 1997, pp. 17-20. Shakabpa mentions that the eastern and western borders into Bhutan were closed around 1676. See Shakabpa 1984, p. 122. On the Dge-lugs-pa invasions of Bhutan in the seventeenth century, see Aris 1979, pp. 219-227.

[65]Such as the *Lha-mo sngags-srung-ma* and two statues made of lead of Jo-bo Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje and Chos-sku Mi-bskyod-rdo-rje. The former statue was perhaps a replica of the famous Buddha image brought from Nepal by Khri-btsun, the Nepalese wife of emperor Srong-brtsan-sgam-po. See Tucci 1962: 121-126; Richardson 1998, pp. 207-215.

[66]See *Sku-bzhi'i dbang-phyug rje-btsun ngag-dbang rgyal-mtshan-gyi rnam-par thar-pa thams-cad mkhyen-pa'i rol-mo*, fols. 89b-91b. I am grateful to John Ardussi for kindly providing a copy of the relevant sections of this biography and for sharing with me some of his research on Ngag-dbang-rgyal-mtshan's travels in eastern Tibet.

[67]*Sku-bzhi'i dbang-phyug*, fol. 90b. The recently discovered manuscript collection preserved in Nepal consists of thirteen volumes.

meeting, we are told that Nyi-ma had once traveled to Bkra-shis-sgang in Shar and developed great faith in the Zhabs-drung Ngag-dbang-rnam-rgyal (1594-c.1651), although he was never able to meet him in person.[68] During his Bhutanese sojourn, Nyi-ma-grags-pa appears to have exerted some influence in both the eastern districts of Bhutan and in the Rta-dbang region of Mon-yul. Guru Bkra-shis notes that he was rather active in these areas and had earned the respect of several prominent Bhutanese lamas.[69]

During the third month of 1684, Nyi-ma-grags-pa traveled back up through southern Dbus and headed straight for the upper Grwa-phyi valley. Responding to a vision he had previously in Nepal, Nyi-ma was intent on meeting with the illustrious Gter-bdag-gling-pa. When he arrived at the monastery of Smin-grol-gling (consecrated only about a decade before in 1676) he found that the monks were building the foundations for a monastic household (*bla-brang*).[70] It is alleged that Gter-bdag-gling-pa was quite delighted to see Nyi-ma-grags-pa, perhaps because he had brought with him a variety of precious woods from India. Presumably, this wood was used to help complete the *bla-brang* which was then under construction. According to Guru Bkra-shis, at that time Gter-bdag-gling-pa recognized Nyi-ma as the secret doctrine-master of his own *gter-ma* cycle *Gshin-rje dregs-pa 'joms-byed* [*Lord of the Dead, Destroyer of Vicious*

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[68]This is not at all surprising since the Zhabs-drung had died much earlier under mysterious circumstances. His death had been kept a state secret for more than fifty years. During that time the official word was that this popular religious leader was in secret retreat absorbed in deep meditation. For details, see Aris 1979, esp. pp. 233-254.

[69]A certain lama Rin-chen-rdo-rje was alleged to have offered him the monastery of Mon-gzigs Tshang-rong, perhaps at Rtsang-sgang in eastern Bhutan, but he graciously declined the offer. At Sha-'ug (Stag-sgo) in the Rta-dbang district of Shar-mon (this was an area much disputed by the governments of Bhutan and Tibet, see Aris 1988, pp. 118-122), he received a clear prophecy indicating that he was to extract the *Dpal mgon-po-ma-ning*. He was, however, unable to obtain the necessary objects, and moreover, he did not think the teaching was that important. The agitated political atmosphere of this region at the time probably contributed to the difficulties Nyi-ma-grags-pa experienced. By the last decades of the seventeenth century, just about the time Nyi-ma was traveling through Mon-yul, the Rta-dbang district had become a Dge-lugs-pa stronghold, officially annexed in 1680. See Aris 1979, p. 259 and Aris 1988, pp. 118-119. For his account of the Dge-lugs-pa annexation of Rta-dbang, Aris relies on the history presented in *Mon-phyogs 'dzin-ma'i char zhwa-ser-gyi ring-lugs 'di-ltar dar-ba'i lo-rgyus dga'-ba'i dpal-ster-ma* of Sdo-smad-pa Sprang Bhikṣu.

[70]See TLNT, vol. 1, fol. 266.

Demons].[71] Nyi-ma-grags-pa apparently accomplished its practices perfectly in secret.[72] The secrecy that both lamas agreed to keep between themselves is reflected in their own biographies. Guru Bkra-shis notes that neither one stated clearly the name of the other in each of the respective accounts of their meeting. The reason for such strict secrecy is not elucidated. I find it particularly intriguing that Gter-bdag-gling-pa refused to acknowledge Nyi-ma-grags-pa's name when he described their first encounter—he simply called him "the Khams-pa pilgrim" (*khams-pa gnas-skor-ba*).[73] The central role that Gter-bdag-gling-pa would eventually play in the life of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's son, O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin (1701-1728), speaks volumes about how Gter-bdag-gling-pa truly viewed their relationship. This is a topic I shall address briefly at the conclusion of this section.

In 1687, Nyi-ma-grags-pa met with Padma-rig-'dzin at Ru-dam Skyid-khram near Sde-dge. Acknowledging his disciple's talent for discovering concealed treasures through visionary means, Padma-rig-'dzin asked his student to survey the area for any hidden objects. The latter remarked that the site was formerly a Bon-po holy place, but a Buddhist site was located just south of there. At that instant, he had a vision of Padmasambhava and of some Bon-po Vidyādharas, and then a Bon *gter-ma* appeared magically in his hand. Padma-rig-'dzin was not pleased. He ordered Nyi-ma to put back the Bon text and re-conceal it as a "double treasure" (*ldab-gter*), admonishing him not to pick and choose between Buddhist and Bon-po doctrines.[74] Then, with Sde-dge Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa acting as beneficiary, Padma-rig-'dzin established the retreat center of Bsam-gtan-chos-gling at the Buddhist holy place below the Bon-po site in the valley of

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[71]Contained in RCTD, vol. 27.

[72]Later he is said to have performed its rituals as "last rites" when he was near death, and only then did he announce publicly that he was practicing Gter-bdag-gling-pa's *Gshin-rje* teaching.

[73]GKCB, p. 842; TLNT, vol. 1, fol. 266.5.

[74]GKCB, p. 845; Martin 1991, p. 177. Guru Bkra-shis goes on to say that this sacred site had also once been a place where Padmasambhava and his retinue produced special medicines. Later, Rje-dbon 'Gyur-med-padma-kun-grol-rnam-rgyal (1706-1773) obtained this medicine and discovered many mortar stones (*rdo-gzhong*) at that location. On the life of Rje-dbon Rin-po-che, see GKCB, pp. 793-800.

Ru-dam. This so-called Ru-dam monastery became more widely known as Rdzogs-chen O-rgyan-bsam-gtan-gling.[75] Afterwards, Padma-rig-'dzin requested that Nyi-ma-grags-pa occupy the abbatial seat of this newly consecrated institution, but Nyi-ma graciously declined citing passages from his own *gter-ma* prophecies which required that he travel constantly. Padma-rig-'dzin gave him his blessing and advised him to obey the commandments of the *gter-ma*. It then appears that Nyi-ma-grags-pa left his teacher and traveled north to the region of Gling(-tshang).

We should mention briefly that after Nyi-ma-grags-pa's death Rdzogs-chen monastery would become the main seat of his successive incarnations. The transmission of his teachings has continued at this institution down to the present in Tibet and even at the re-established monastery in southern India.[76] We shall soon see that the Rdzogs-chen monastery in Tibet also became perhaps the first institution to commission the preparation of a set of blocks for the printing of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol*. Evidently, it was a print struck from these eighteenth-century Tibetan blocks that provided the basis for the later Bhutanese redactions.

Sometime around 1690, Nyi-ma-grags-pa went to Glang-thang in Gling and stayed for awhile at a mountain hermitage. The leaders of that area had apparently developed great faith in him, for we are told that the Gling-dpon Rdo-rje-mgon-po offered him the old monastery of Ri-'gul-dgon and requested that he also consecrate a new religious center. He built the mountain hermitage of Re-zheg Zhe-chen. It is not clear whether this was the original site of what would become the Zhe-chen monastery established in 1735 by 'Gyur-med-kun-bzang-rnam-rgyal (1710-1769).[77] Zhe-chen was a famous repository

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[75]A brief history of the Rdzogs-chen monastery with its abbatial lineage (*gdan-rabs*) is provided in GKCB, pp. 765-817.
[76]Interview, Khenpo Nyima Dondup.
[77]On the history of Zhe-chen Bstan-gnyis-dar-rgyas-gling and its succession of abbots, see GKCB, pp. 913-922.

of woodblocks for the texts of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*.[78] It is noteworthy that this Zhe-chen redaction contains relevant liturgical works written by Rdzogs-chen Padma-rig-'dzin and a text said to belong to the Kar-gling *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol*—a text cycle whose unique transmission lineage is identical to that associated with the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. The first Zhe-chen Rab-'byams-pa Bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan (1654-1709) was another of Padma-rig-'dzin's principal students, and the second hierarch was born into a family affiliated with the Rdzogs-chen monastery. It is not inconceivable, therefore, that Nyi-ma-grags-pa would have had some influence on the development of the Zhe-chen tradition. We should recall that the obscure *Dbang-bzhi phrad-tshad rang-grol* is known only to have been handed down through a single lineage which eventually reached Nyi-ma-grags-pa. The likelihood is quite strong, therefore, that the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmission was introduced into the liturgical program at Zhe-chen-dgon through either Nyi-ma-grags-pa himself or one of his immediate successors.[79]

In 1693, Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa invited Nyi-ma-grags-pa back to Sde-dge. There, he consecrated the religious center of Stag-mo-sgang Bskal-bzang-phun-tshogs-gling, which became his main seat.[80] Nyi-ma offered Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa many priceless gifts, including various *gter-ma* objects, yellow scrolls, an image of Vimalamitra, the *Phur-pa hūṃ-chen* [*Great Hūṃ-Dagger*], the *Sman-mdo* [*Medicine Sūtra*], and a manuscript and ink-pen (*phyag-smyug*)[81] once owned by the ancient translator Klu'i-dbang-po which Nyi-ma had discovered as *gter-ma*. It would appear from all of this that the Sde-dge ruler

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[78]Dorje 1996, p. 526. Prints from some of these blocks have been gathered and reproduced recently in Delhi under the title *Kar-gling zhi-khro'i 'don-cha*. See edition ZH.

[79]On the other hand, the Zhe-chen liturgy of the complete *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* probably came from Smin-grol-gling, since both monasteries shared a very close affiliation.

[80]Interestingly, Guru Bkra-shis goes on to say that his very own (great)grandfather (*mes-po*) had been the patron who had offered the land upon which Nyi-ma-grags-pa built his monastery. See GKCB, p. 847. Could this have been Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa? Was Guru Bkra-shis born into the royal house of Sde-dge? Unfortunately, at this stage we know precious little about the life of this important eastern Tibetan historian. On this point, see introductory comments in Martin 1991b, pp. 329-330.

[81]David Germano says that such ink pens with ornate holders were highly valued in traditional Tibet (e-mail correspondence of September 4, 1999).

was particularly sympathetic to the affairs of Nyi-ma-grags-pa and looked to him as a remarkable miracle-worker. The feelings were mutual. As an illustration of their special connection, and of the *gter-ston's* extraordinary powers, Guru Bkra-shis tells the story of a Sde-dge woman who had become possessed by demons.[82] She had wandered off alone and lost her way. Upon her return, the demons provoked her, particularly at night, to scream out "I am O-rgyan Rin-po-che!" or "I am Gling Ge-sar!", and she would then magically appear in their guise. Eventually, the woman started offering predictions and people developed faith in what she had to say. Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa had heard rumors about this female soothsayer and asked several lamas about her authenticity. Disappointed with their answers, he spoke with Padma-rig-'dzin, who claimed that she had been cited in the *gter-ma* prophecy of Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje and that Nyi-ma-grags-pa was the only one who could subdue her demons. Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa then invited Nyi-ma to his palace at Byang-me-ling and asked if he would destroy these demons who had come in human form. The *gter-ston* promptly assumed the form of a wrathful deity and, with blazing samādhi, exorcised (*bskrad-pa*) the evil spirits, sending them to a higher plane (*gnas-spar*). But Sangs-rgyas-bstan-pa was not convinced that he had done the right thing, since there were so many people who still had faith in this woman. He sent a letter of request to Bdud-'dul-rdo-rje and asked for divination. The old *gter-ston* responded that demons are deceptive and, in human form, they appear normal to those who cannot see through the illusion. In reality, this woman had wanted to destroy the religious and secular rule of the Sde-dge king—she needed to be eliminated.

In the end, Nyi-ma-grags-pa was lavishly compensated for his efforts by the Sde-dge ruler. Needless to say, these two great figures shared a special bond. Perhaps it was this profitable connection which lay at the root of the inter-*gter-ston* feuds between Nyi-ma-

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[82]This woman had become what is known as a "living demon" (*gson-'dre*). See Tucci 1988, p. 187.

grags-pa and Yongs-dge Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje that resulted in the former's repudiation by the Karma-pa sect. We learn that this bitter rivalry extended also to Stag-sham-pa Nus-ldan-rdo-rje (b.1655), whose teaching lineage was transmitted also through the Karma-pa hierarchs.[83] As Martin has suggested, all three were in positions to benefit from the patronage of the royal house of Sde-dge.[84] To be sure there must be more to this tale, but unfortunately all the facts have not yet surfaced. We will not know the full details of this contentious triangle until the lives of these three saints and the intricate relations they cultivated with the political elite of eastern Tibet are more thoroughly understood.

Rdzogs-chen Padma-rig-'dzin died in 1697. Nyi-ma-grags-pa made all the necessary arrangements for the funeral services, made offerings to his teacher's corpse, and performed daily prostrations until his forehead and hands began to bleed (*dbu-dpral nas sku-mtshal 'byung*). At that time, Padma-rig-'dzin's "heart-son" (*thugs-sras*), the first Zhe-chen Rab-'byams-pa Bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan, was traveling to Lho-khog in the Mkhar-mdo valley near Ri-bo-che, so Nyi-ma-grags-pa was given the responsibility of taking care of his teacher's affairs. The Dpon-slob of Rdzogs-chen monastery, Nam-mkha'-'od-gsal, asked Nyi-ma-grags-pa repeatedly to take over Padma-rig-'dzin's seat, but the *gter-ston* responded that he had already declined the invitation before when his teacher had earlier made the same request. At that point, he went back to Stag-mo-sgang and built a thirty-three storied stupa in honor of his teacher.[85]

At some point during his travels through Mi-nyag and Li-thang,[86] Nyi-ma-grags-pa ended up in Sog Zam-khar (Zam-tsha, Dzam-thang?), where he met two emissaries of the

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[83]On whom, see GKCB, pp. 574-575; Bradburn 1995, pp. 275-276.
[84]Martin 1991, pp. 176-177.
[85]After Padma-rig-'dzin's death, Nyi-ma-grags-pa is said to have met his wisdom-body (*chos-sku*) many times in visions and in dreams. In one such vision at Rtsi-lu-gu-rab, he is alleged to have received the *Rgyal-mtshan rtse-mo*.
[86]At the monastery at Li-thang, there was an epidemic of some sort and Nyi-ma-grags-pa was asked to exorcise the demon responsible for the disease" (*nad-kyi bdag-po*). His success resulted in his receiving

Lhasa government (*gzhung sa-chen*), Bka'-bcu Ngag-dbang-dpal-mgon and Gzhon-nu-blo-gros. Apparently they had been previously informed about Nyi-ma-grags-pa either with regard to his efforts to assist in the renovation of Bsam-yas or perhaps to his supposed connection through prophecy with the Dalai Lama. To tell this story, however, we must return to one of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's earlier visits to central Tibet sometime around 1682. At that time, he had just recently come out of retreat at Srin-mo-rdzong. Drawing upon both prophecy and his own favorable experiences in Lhasa about a decade prior, he realized that there were auspicious connections between he and the "sovereign" (*gong-sa*, i.e., the fifth Dalai Lama), and that the latter was intended to be his chief doctrine-master. However, there would be great obstacles on their path. On several occasions during this period Nyi-ma-grags-pa had wanted to speak with the Dalai Lama, but he was not able to break through the bureaucratic barriers blocking him from the highest ranks of the government. Consequently, the auspices between them degenerated. Of course, Nyi-ma-grags-pa had no way of knowing at that time that the Great Fifth was already dead. He died in 1682, but the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho concealed this fact and pretended for fifteen years that the Dalai Lama was living in strict retreat.[87] It is no mystery why Nyi-ma-grags-pa was never permitted an audience with his prophesied disciple.

Nyi-ma was clearly troubled by these constraints. He had asked some other Rnying-ma-pa lamas in the area to go to Lhasa in his place and to speak on his behalf, but they too

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special favor among the leading lamas of that institution. Housed at the monastery were woodblocks of the complete Buddhist *Bka'-'gyur*. This was the famous 'Jang-sa-tham redaction believed to have been produced in the years 1609-1614 in one hundred and ten volumes and to have served as the basis for the Co-ne edition of 1721-1731. See Imaeda 1982-84; Samten Jampa 1987; Harrison 1996, pp. 81-82. Nyi-ma-grags-pa offered everything he owned in order to pay the expenses of having three copies prepared from these blocks, which he then brought back with him to the temple at Stag-mo-sgang. The fact that copies of this Li-thang edition are known to have been deposited in this Rnying-ma-pa monastery near Sde-dge has not been recognized in the relevant studies of the Tibetan canon. Perhaps these prints have survived the political events in Tibet over the last several decades and can now be located in one of the libraries affiliated with the Rdzogs-chen monastery.

[87] Ahmad 1970; Hoffman 1972, p. 59; Shakabpa 1984, pp. 125-128; Snellgrove & Richardson 1986, p. 201; W. Smith 1996, pp. 117-121; Richardson 1998, p. 457. Compare also the secrecy of the Zhabs-drung's death in Bhutan at roughly the same time period, see Aris 1979, pp. 201-254; Ardussi 1997, pp. 17-19.

were unsuccessful. In this light, Guru Bkra-shis quotes several cryptic passages from the fifth Dalai Lama's own secret prophecies (*gsang-lung*):

> "Even though the sun shines on the peak of the eastern mountain
> If obscured by white clouds it cannot be seen."

And:

> "The snake's sharp poisoned tongue when stretched out is two-pronged."

And, again:

> "The sheep and wolf sit together but,
> The shepherd sees no reason to separate them."[88]

The message was clear. Nyi-ma-grags-pa and the fifth Dalai Lama were not destined to meet, despite forecasts to the contrary. Moreover, there were to be some false and even dangerous friends along the way—wolves in sheep's clothing, as it were. Guru Bkra-shis informs us that Nyi-ma-grags-pa had actually put his trust in the wrong people. Out of jealousy, we are told, those Rnying-ma-pa go-betweens delivered a distorted message and so the doors to the offices of the Great Fifth were closed to him. But almost a decade later certain lines of contact would be re-opened again.

At Sog Zam-khar, Nyi-ma-grags-pa was venerated by the two government representatives, with whom he discussed his previous attempts to make contact with the ruler of Lhasa (*gzhung-sa*). In particular, he explained to them that prophecy had indicated that an auspicious patron-priest relation was to prevail between he and Tibet's leader (*gzhung-sa*), but because the latter was such a high-ranking official both were

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[88]GKCB, p. 841: *shar ri rtser nyi ma shar na yang / sprin dkar pos bsgribs nas gsal ma 'gyur // sprul lce gnyis brkyangs pa'i dug lce rno // lug spyang kir bag phebs sdod pa la / da rdzi bos nyan sel ci rang byed.*

unable to fulfill the promise. The Lhasa emissaries agreed to pursue the matter with the proper authorities. They seem to have been successful, for shortly thereafter the Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho sent an order to Nyi-ma-grags-pa that he should come quickly to Lhasa.

In Lhasa, Nyi-ma-grags-pa made prostrations and offerings to the Sde-srid and to the young sixth Dalai Lama Tshangs-dbyangs-rgya-mtsho, who had only recently been enthroned in 1697.[89] No mention is made of the concealment of the Great Fifth's death. In accord with Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's wishes and in spite of broken auspices, Nyi-ma-grags accepted this "protector of the land" (*sa-skyong*)[90] as his student and bestowed his teachings upon him.[91] Despite a positive reception, Guru Bkra-shis indicates that there was some uneasy tension between this patron and priest. For reasons not clearly specified, the Sde-srid scolded Nyi-ma-grags-pa about his late arrival to Lhasa. Perhaps, as I understand this fragmented account, the *gter-ston* was supposed to have come to the capital city much earlier in order to help restore various holy places (as he had done previously at Bsam-yas), but because of his failure to network his way into the inner sanctum of the Lhasa government, he was unable to establish contacts with either the Dalai Lama or his acting regent (to be fair, these were indeed some troubled times in Lhasa). Consequently, neither of the two leaders realized that Nyi-ma-grags had actually

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[89]See Shakabpa 1984, pp. 125-39; Aris 1988, pp. 149-153. The sixth Dalai Lama was notoriously unfit for the job as leader of the Tibetan government. He is alleged to have been a rather capricious and impassioned young man, and is best renowned as an accomplished poet and romantic lyricist. For translations and analysis of the sixth Dalai Lama's poems, see especially Houston 1982; Sorensen 1990.

[90]On the development of this title for the regents of Lhasa, see Richardson 1998, pp. 449-457.

[91]Nyi-ma-grags-pa presented the initiations and readings of the *Rta-mgrin dregs-pa zil-gnon* and the *Lha-chen*. The Sde-srid would later offer him in return the monasteries of Rta-rna and Yi-phug in Nang-chen, and in the region of Nem-tsha, Spang-lcib[-lcin?]-dgon and Ba-dan-dgon—the ancient monastic seats of Nag-po-thog-'phen (see discussion above). However, due to some turbulent circumstances, Nyi-ma was only abie to accept the monastery of Rta-rna-dgon. It is interesting that the *Rta-mgrin dregs-pa zil-gnon* is the only work by Nyi-ma-grags-pa that appears to have survived the censorship of 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul. It is likely that this practice was preserved in some form or another by the successors of Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho's tradition in central Tibet. Of course, such speculations would have to be supported by stronger evidence.

made several unsuccessful attempts to reach them. From their perspective, then, he must have appeared indolent and unreliable. As we have noted in several cases, this was not the first time that this *gter-ston* provoked negative feelings in those around him. Certainly, there must have been some layer of truth in the biased portrayals of him as arrogant and boastful. Nonetheless, I think it is telling that someone as politically significant as the Sde-srid of Lhasa would have actively sought him out as a teacher. If for a moment we try to imagine the political chaos that was ensuing during those years in central Tibet, then my point is all the more striking.[92] I believe it is not unreasonable to suggest that Nyi-ma-grags-pa would have actively taken advantage of this sort of political clout to better promote his own ideas. Indeed his fame and success among some of the most prominent leaders in central and eastern Tibet was arguably the result of a potent combination of some key religious and political factors. Perhaps the initial impetus for the widespread appeal of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, and for its eventual establishment as the primary source for the performance of Tibetan funeral rites, can be traced primarily to this well-connected sorceror from Khams.

Before Lha-bzang Khan assumed full political control of Lhasa, Nyi-ma-grags-pa had already fled south to Lho-rgyud to avoid possible persecution by the Qośot leader and his Manchu supporters.[93] As the story goes, the patron-priest relationship he had previously shared with the Lhasa government grew cold, for obvious reasons. The profitable relations he had cultivated with the former Tibetan administration had not carried over to the new Mongol regime. We can assume that he was not fully aware of the

[92]The end of that story is well known. Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho was forced to resign in 1703 by Lha-bzang Khan. In 1705, he was executed and the sixth Dalai Lama was captured and deposed, only to be murdered en route the following year.

[93]There had been some troubled relations between the Sde-srid and Lha-bzang Khan over a number of issues and he was eventually forced to resign in 1703. It is well known that Lha-bzang Khan and his Tibetan allies actively sought out and punished the supporters of Sde-srid Sangs-rgyas-rgya-mtsho, so there is no mystery why lamas such as Nyi-ma-grag-pa would have not wanted to remain in Lhasa during this period. On the conflicts between the Sde-srid and the Qośot Mongol, see Shakabpa 1984, pp. 125-133.

tumultuous circumstances that led to the government take-over in Lhasa, for he initially made attempts to meet with Tibet's new ruler (presumably Lha-bzang Khan). As would be expected, he was not successful. Discouraged, and maybe even a bit fearful, he fled to Lho-rgyud, to some area near the sacred site of Guru Rdo-rje-rgyal-po. It was there in the south that Nyi-ma-grags-pa began his efforts to refurbish some of the sacred sites in that region. After awhile he received auspicious signs through divination and so he sent a certain Dor-tshang 'Phrin-las-rdo-rje to Lhasa with a formal letter of request. The response from the new ruler was apparently positive and he was granted the permission to continue his restoration work. Eventually, he worked his way back towards the eastern regions between Spo-bo and Mdo-smad, where he is alleged to have renovated and constructed more than fifty stūpas. In 1703, he established the retreat center of Chags-ru (Char) 'Od-gsal at Srin-rdzong which earned him the moniker Char Nyi-ma-grags. At the behest of one Rgya-ston Blo-bzang-legs-pa, he also founded the monastery of Bde-skyid-gling. The next year he opened the pilgrimage path at Srin-rdzong-gnas, which is said to have been as distinctive as that of the Rong-skor at Tsa-ri.[94]

During this period, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's reputation seems to have taken a turn for the worse. It is at this point in the narrative that Guru Bkra-shis describes briefly the antagonistic encounters with Yongs-dge Mi-'gyur-rdo-rje and Stag-sham-pa and his group. In addition, Guru Bkra-shis relates an episode reflecting the sort of mob hysteria that the fearsome Nyi-ma-grags-pa was apparently capable of instigating. While the *gter-ston* was restoring a certain holy place in the Rta-mda valley of eastern Tibet, some of the people in the area began to assume, for unspecified reasons, that Nyi-ma-grags-pa was practicing black magic (*mthu-gtad*). Outraged the villagers razed the temple which he had just built, and from the rubble extracted a *liṅga*, a type of effigy used in certain rituals of

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[94]The Tsa-ri Rong-skor is discussed at length in Huber 1999, *passim*, esp. chap. 8.

destruction.[95] This device the angry mob then flaunted at the king as proof of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's ongoing nefarious activities. To the people's dismay, the king spoke out in support of the *gter-ston* and denounced those who had destroyed his auspicious building.

Should we accuse these villagers of planting evidence? In this tale we do find grounds for suggesting that Nyi-ma-grags-pa had begun to irk some of those around him to the point that they began indicting him of some very serious offenses. Although we should remain open to the possibility that there might have been some truth to these rumors, it seems a bit extreme to assert that Nyi-ma was acting solely as a malicious sorcerer. Instead, I am inclined to believe that there was something slightly less exotic about their antagonism; a sort of contagious hostility that appears to have reached a feverish level only towards the end of his life and continued long after his death. A second observation may provide the necessary clue. The king of the Rta-mda valley region championed the *gter-ston* even against apparent mass condemnation. Such unqualified and enthusiastic support from high-ranking leaders and aristocrats seems to have been one of the hallmarks of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's career. Clearly, the esteem in which he was held by the aristocracy of his day was largely due to his perceived magical power and skill at subjugating evil forces. In a world driven by religious commerce between potent priests and wealthy donors threatened at all times by destructive demons, it is no mystery why this formidable *gter-ston* would be despised and discredited by some who would view him as rival. In this light, it also seems to me that Nyi-ma-grags-pa's reputation as a subduer of demons and other evil manifestations of the dead must have surely contributed to his charisma as the unparalleled master of the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmissions.

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[95]On the use of *liṅga* in Tibetan ritual, see Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956, p. 360; Stein 1957; Tucci 1988, pp. 185-187; Beyer 1978, pp. 310-312; Norbu 1995, pp. 98-102.

Nyi-ma-grags-pa went back to Sde-dge and renewed his connections with the ruling house. By this point, that area had come under the control of Chos-rgyal Bstan-pa-tshe-ring, the fortieth king of Sde-dge and concurrently the fifth abbot of Lhun-grub-steng.[96] Bstan-pa-tshe-ring made offerings to the *gter-ston* and, in return, Nyi-ma-grags-pa bestowed his own teachings upon him. A story is told that at that time there was a war in Li-thang between Sog-po Sgo-mang Chos-rje and Sde-dge.[97] Nyi-ma-grags-pa invoked a great wrathful deity with his fearsome retinue and commanded that they attack the enemy forces. Shortly thereafter Sde-dge emerged victorious. The people claimed that the battle was won through the combined powers of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's magic and his divine loyal protectors. Consequently, the *gter-ston* was touted a religious hero and everyone developed great faith in his abilities, although Bstan-pa-tshe-ring was still a bit skeptical. He asked Nyi-ma-grags-pa to prove to him that his powers were genuine. The *gter-ston* then proceeded to recount his many "war stories" celebrating his success in subjugating innumerable demons over the years. Bstan-pa-tshe-ring is said to have been promptly convinced of the *gter-ston*'s prowess. Then Nyi-ma-grags-pa performed a ceremony for the king and granted a prophecy that he would remain a prosperous and successful ruler throughout his life. Afterwards, he returned to his former seat at Stag-mo-sgang.

From 1706 onwards, Nyi-ma-grags-pa remained at his monastery where he concentrated on teaching and granting initiations to his students. There, he gave transmissions of his own *gter-ma* teachings freely to those disciples prophesied as his doctrine-masters. During this time, he also composed many textbooks on the generation and completion stages of *tantric* meditation. In addition, he wrote down a variety of liturgical instructions on how to accomplish initiations, visualize mandalas, construct

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[96]Kolmaś 1988, p. 130.
[97]There must be some mention of this conflict in the historical records of the region, although I have not yet located any such references.

rituals, and so forth. It seems reasonable that in this period Nyi-ma-grags may also have compiled and edited the writings of other authors that he had wanted to include in the library at Stag-mo-sgang. These books would have been intended to reflect the individual character and customs of that local institution. Among these works I would imagine that the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* was one that stood prominent, since Nyi-ma-grags-pa was reputed to have been one of its special conservators. From this perspective, I wish to suggest tentatively—in the absence of any detailed textual evidence—that the particular arrangement of that set of teachings which we know today as the *Bar-do thos-grol* might have been completed at Stag-mo-sgang during these final years of Nyi-ma's life. The question remains, however, whether he had commissioned the production of blocks for its printing. We do know that only within a few decades after Nyi-ma-grags-pa's death a blockprint of his *Bar-do thos-grol* was prepared at Rdzogs-chen monastery, but we still have no information regarding the format of the original upon which this copy was based.

In the final analysis, we have demonstrated that Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa was not only a leading protagonist in the diffusion of the famed *Bar-do thos-grol*, but also a prosperous and successful religious celebrity. His personal involvement with many of the influential leaders of central and eastern Tibet during the latter half of the seventeenth century afforded him direct access to elite levels of society, where he was rewarded lavishly for his skill as exorcist and magician. As revealed in later legend, however, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's mastery of such arts did not always merit praise. In later years he was occasionally persecuted by the people around him and attempts were made to discredit his reputation; subsequent generations even went so far as to exclude him from the historical record. Although the sources are mute on this point, it would appear that a possible reason for clashes between he and some of his contemporaries was not so much a rejection of his magical facility, but more so with regard to the degree of influence he

exerted in the social arena. To be sure his favored status among certain aristocratic patrons, the wealth and prestige which he had garnered as a result of his perceived ability to destroy demons and liberate the dead, as well as his apparent aggressive self-assurance, angered and challenged those who stood to benefit from the very same benefactors. Ironically, it was his magic, attractive to so many people during his lifetime, that later opponents would proclaim was the cause of his scandalous fall from grace. But in true conformity with Tibetan hagiography, his supporters would counter by depicting Nyi-ma-grags-pa as nothing less than a saint locked in combat with enemies who had become through woeful ignorance the real embodiments of evil.[98]

It also seems possible that as master of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*, and of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in particular, Nyi-ma-grags-pa might have adapted and manipulated this obscure *gter-ma* cycle to better suit his own personal ambitions. As noted in Chapter 1, Tibetan funeral rituals require the performance of exorcisms. In Tibet, demons and death are intimately linked. Those who are skilled in dealing with one are by necessity skilled in dealing with the other. Nyi-ma-grags-pa's power over demons must certainly have contributed to his charisma as master of the dead. This would have surely helped also in promoting the authority of his own teachings, and particularly of his own interpretations of the rituals of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, over and against those of the more prestigious *gter-stons* whose practices had been well-established with stronger political affiliations, such as Gter-bdag-gling-pa and the fifth Dalai Lama or Stag-sham-pa Nus-ldan-rdo-rje and the Karma-pa. Nyi-ma's charismatic power would have helped to insure the popularity of his *Bar-do thos-grol* within those communities that had been introduced to it. This may give us another perspective on the nature of his troubled relations with other competing

[98]In this regard, consider Guru Bkra-shis's defense of Nyi-ma-grags-pa where he charges the *gter-ston*'s opponents with ignorance and even suggests that those who protest too insistently may actually themselves be the problem. See GKCB, p. 852: *ha cang bdud du nan gyis bsgrubs na bsgrub bya sgrub byed go log pa'i skyon 'byung ba'ang srid de.*

religious leaders. In any event, the Kar-gling tradition in general was never instituted as a central religious system tied exclusively to a single monastic complex. Nonetheless, after Nyi-ma-grags-pa's death, his *Bar-do thos-grol* certainly grew to be enormously popular and came to achieve widespread distribution. What may have been some of the factors that made this possible?

2. TWO TRADITIONS CONVERGE

Nyi-ma-grags-pa is said to have sired three sons, but the only one that survived childhood was O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin-grags-pa (alias Guru Bsod-nams-bstan-'dzin), who himself only lived for twenty-seven years.[99] This son would become the second abbot of Stag-mo-sgang and an essential link between the Stag-sgang (or Char Nyi-grags) and Smin-grol-gling traditions. His role as mediator between the two lineages, however, would not be fulfilled until after his father's death in 1710. At the conclusion of Guru Bkra-shis's biographical sketch, we learn that just before Nyi-ma-grags-pa died he made several requests pertaining to his funeral and to the affairs of his surviving son. First, he asked that his corpse be preserved in tact and that a golden mausoleum be constructed to house his remains. Secondly, in a final testament he requested that the famed leader of Smin-grol-gling, Gter-bdag-gling-pa, be invited to assist in the preparation and performance of the funeral services, and most importantly, to help raise his young boy, O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin. Nyi-ma's disciples promised to fulfill his dying requests.

In the iron-male-tiger year in the month of *dbo* during the full moon (Wednesday March 15, 1710), Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa passed away.[100] Several of his students

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[99]He is believed to be the reincarnation of Dwags-po *gter-ston* Bzang-po-rdo-rje, student of 'Ja'-tshon-snying-po and Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol. See GKCB, p. 865; Bradburn 1995, pp. 243-244.

[100]Tib., *lcags-pho-stag dbo-zla'i nya*. The western date noted above is according to the New Phug-pa calendrical system which became official in 1696 and is the one currently in use today. See Schuh 1973; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, vol. 1, p. 400.

traveled promptly to the monastery of Smin-grol-gling and made offerings of dedication to Gter-bdag-gling-pa. They told him what Nyi-ma-grags-pa had requested in his final statements, and the great *gter-ston* responded:

> "Although it may have appeared that he and I were not very good friends, in actuality we were quite close. He was the secret doctrine-master of my *gter-ma* cycle *Gshin-rje [dregs-pa 'joms-byed]*. He perfected its practice and was successful in keeping it secret. Consequently, we were both able to lead a fulfilling life without obstacles. Now, he has died and that is not good. But here [at Smin-grol-gling] I will do whatever needs to be done for his son [O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin]."[101]

Gter-bdag-gling-pa then announced that the two separate teaching lineages of Char Nyi-ma-grags and Smin-grol-gling would from this point on be viewed as one lineage, a single tradition. Afterwards, arrangements were made to send Nyi-ma-grags-pa's son to central Tibet. This convergence of tradition, especially in light of the future history of the Kar-gling transmissions, was rather significant. We cannot ignore Gter-bdag-gling-pa's admission that he and Nyi-ma-grags-pa were close comrades despite perceived animosity. Again, we see reference to a secret bond shared between them, but we still do not fully understand why they felt it necessary to conceal their relationship. On the other hand, in terms of the secrecy of the practice of the *Gshin-rje dregs-pa 'joms-byed*, Gter-bdag-gling-pa does give us some hint as to why he felt indebted to Nyi-ma-grags-pa. We must bear in mind that *gter-ma* revelations were frequently kept secret for a variety of reasons, although it appears the basic motivation was to regulate the proliferation and dispersal of

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[101]GKCB, p. 859: *nged rang gnyis ltar snang mthun 'jug mi mdzad pa ltar yod kyang / don du nged rang ni gshin rje'i skor gyi gsang pa'i chos bdag khong pa yin te khong gis nyams bzhes dang gsang rgya mthar phyin mdzad pa des nged rang gnyis char gyi sku tshe dang 'phrin las la phan pa che zhing bstan pa'i gsos su'ang gyur mod / da cha khong pa zhi bar gshegs pa ma legs / 'on kyang rgyal sras la bdag rkyen gang drag 'di nas phul chog pa byed ces.*

these sorts of teachings.[102] Morover, there always seemed to have been a certain mistrust of the whole process involved in discovering hidden treasures, and thus secrecy can be seen as a means to avoid undue criticism.[103] Whatever the case, the important point here is that failure to adhere to the code of secrecy once stipulated was believed to result in either the diminishment of the *gter-ma*'s effective power or, worse yet, endangerment to the life of its discoverer. So, when Gter-bdag-gling-pa announced that Nyi-ma-grags-pa was true to his word and succeeded in keeping the *Gshin-rje* practice secret for so long, he was in a sense saying that he owed Nyi-ma-grags-pa his very life. This is one of the ways history can justify Gter-bdag-gling-pa's adoption of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's son, O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin, and the union of two different lineages. To be sure, the power and prestige of Gter-bdag-gling-pa's tradition in Tibet must have had a profound effect on the widespread promotion of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* throughout the country.

We should be clear that the merger between the teaching lineages of Gter-bdag-gling-pa and Nyi-ma-grags-pa did not entirely originate in the person of O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin. Remember that the Smin-gling tradition of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* was actually formed by the convergence of three distinct lines of transmission, one of which emanated from a certain Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po. This obscure figure initiated the single lineage of the *Dbang-bzhi yongs-rdzogs* (and it would appear the *Bar-do thos-grol*, as well). It was this tradition that eventually reached, through separate channels, both Gter-bdag-gling-pa and Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa. We see this common source reflected clearly in the transmission lists included in the Bum-thang redaction of the *Bar-do thos-grol* and in Gter-bdag-gling-pa's own *gsan-yig*. We thus can argue with little doubt that, following the latter half of the seventeenth century, the textual tradition of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in

[102]Thondup 1986, pp. 161-162; Gyatso 1998, p. 169.

[103]On this issue, see Dudjom Rinpoche's defense of the *gter-ma* tradition in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, vol. 1, pp. 927-928. On false *gter-ma* revelations, see Thondup 1986, pp. 154-156. A detailed defense of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, in particular, can be found in THGL.

Tibet was held and maintained exclusively by both the Char Nyi-grags and Smin-grol-gling traditions—the former appears to have been preserved most effectively by Nyi-ma-grags-pa's successors at the Rdzogs-chen monastery in Khams. By this, I do not wish to suggest that the two traditions were in no way distinct. Although they share a common origin, their different histories, degrees of editorial revision, varying content and so forth meant that the textual artifacts would be somewhat idiosyncratic.[104] The important point is that the *Bar-do thos-grol* as we know it today was produced by the cross-fertilization of certain old textual lineages that were maintained exclusively by the traditions of Nyi-ma-grags-pa and Gter-bdag-gling-pa.

This specific hybridization is perhaps best illustrated by the example of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's son. Guru Bkra-shis reveals that O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin (given the name O-rgyan 'Gyur-med-bstan-'phel-rgya-mtsho by Gter-bdag-gling-pa, his refuge lama) actually received the Kar-gling initiations, not from his own father but from Gter-bdag-gling-pa's second oldest son, the second Smin-gling-khri-chen Padma-'gyur-med-rgya-mtsho.[105] In addition, from Lo-chen Dharma-śrī he was granted the "book-authorization" (*pod-lung*) of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, which presumably meant that he was given copies of the *Zhi-khro* texts not included in the smaller *Bar-do thos-grol* collection. O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin would later transmit these teachings to Nyi-ma-grags-pa's first incarnation, the third abbot of Stag-mo-sgang Padma-theg-mchog Bstan-pa'i-rgyal-mtshan (alias Rig-'dzin Bstan-skyong-rgya-mtsho, 1712-1774).[106] In 1755, this lama bestowed the Kar-gling transmission upon the third Rdzogs-chen-pa Nges-don-bstan-'dzin. This individual would later take on the task of arranging the texts and preparing the blocks for what may have been the first printed edition of the *Bar-do thos-grol*.

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[104]Compare, for example, the content and textual sequence of edition KS (representing Gter-bdag-gling-pa's tradition) and edition T3.
[105]GKCB, p. 866.
[106]On whom see GKCB, pp. 871-886.

Again we should repeat that both of the traditions that converged in the person of the child O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin already shared a pre-existing connection. Recall that the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmissions handed down separately to Gter-bdag-gling-pa of Smin-grol-gling and to Nyi-ma-grags-pa of Stag-mo-sgang had both been received previously through the hierarchs of Lha-lung monastery in Lho-brag. The strong affiliation between this institution and the monastery of Sgang-steng in eastern Bhutan meant that the Kar-gling tradition of Lha-lung was certainly known in that area prior to Nyi-ma-grags-pa's Bhutanese sojourn in 1684. But Nyi-ma's noted influence on some of the preeminent political and religious leaders of that region might have played a determining role in the establishment in Bhutan of his own particular adaptations of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. For whatever reason, it is certain that Nyi-ma-grags-pa's redaction provided the basis for all existing Bhutanese editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. These popular collections have since become the most widely available versions outside of Tibet, particularly in India.

3. THE PRINTED TEXT

In the late eighteenth century, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's arrangement of the *Bar-do thos-grol* was preserved, perhaps for the very first time, in a blockprint edition prepared at the monastery of Bsam-gtan-chos-gling (Rdzogs-chen) by the third Rdzogs-chen-pa Nges-don-bstan-'dzin-bzang-po.[107] It was this edition that provided the basis in Bhutan for the Bum-thang redaction (B2) published in 1952 in memory of the second Bhutanese king, 'Jigs-med-dbang-phyug (1926-1952).[108] Presumably, the Rdzogs-chen blockprint also

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[107]This information is drawn from the colophon of edition B2: *zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo la / mthad 'os su gyur nga'i mdo rgyud dang chos spyod sogs byin rlabs zab gnad che ba cu ma'i kha bskang gis brgyan ste bklag chog tu bgyis pa 'di ni / thos grol par du bzhengs pa po rnams kyi bskul ngor śākya'i dge slong nges don bstan 'dzin bzang pos bsam gtan chos gling gi dge gnas su bkod pa'i dge bas mkha' khyab kyi 'gro ba thams cad gdod ma'i mgon po kun tu bzang po'i go 'phangs myur du thob pa'i rgyur gyur cig*. A brief account of his life can be found in GKCB, pp. 800-08.

[108]On whom see Aris 1994, pp. 115-143.

formed the basis of an earlier Bhutanese edition prepared in Spa-gro in 1943 through the efforts of one Nor-bu-bzang-po, then the Bhutanese *lo-phyag* to the Lhasa government.[109] The Spa-gro redaction, in various reprinted forms (B1, B1a, B4, DH), has since become the most widely available version of the *Bar-do thos-grol* outside of Tibet.[110]

At present, the history of the Kar-gling tradition in Bhutan remains a mystery, and so we do not yet know the specific circumstances involved in the introduction of Nges-don-bstan-'dzin's blockprint to the printing houses in Bum-thang and Spa-gro. The traditions of Rdzogs-chen monastery never seem to have been established in any particular institution in Bhutan.[111] We must assume then that the favorable contacts in the previous century between Nyi-ma-grags-pa and some of Bhutan's political leaders—such as the ambassador Ngag-dbang-rgyal-mtshan—must have been partly the reason Nyi-ma's *Bar-do thos-grol* was accepted in that country. But can we extend this reasoning to explain how the Nyi-grags redaction came to be so widely represented among all known collections of the *Bar-do thos-grol*—i.e., those manuscripts and blockprints that originated in different parts of Tibet, Nepal, and Sikkim and that are now preserved, for example, in libraries in London, Berlin, and the United States? We cannot be sure. Perhaps it was simply Nyi-ma-grags-pa's power and influence—extending across the whole of Tibet, and in parts of India, Nepal, Bhutan, and so forth—that helped to popularize his textual traditions throughout such widely diverse localities. A more

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[109]The establishment of the *lo-phyag*—the custom of dispatching a regular diplomatic representative to the Tibetan government in Lhasa as a mission of tribute—was initiated after the invasion of Bhutan by Pho-lha-nas Bsod-nams-stobs-rgyas (1689-1747, r.1728-1747) in 1730. According to Shakabpa, the tradition continued until 1950. Therefore, Nor-bu-bzang-po was probably the last of such Bhutanese diplomats. See Shakabpa 1984, p. 145; cf. also Aris 1979, p. 259.

[110]See editions B1, B1a, B4, and DH. The printing blocks of this edition were preserved at the famous temple of Bskyed-chu lha-khang (Skyer-chu), believed to have been built in the seventh century by the emperor Srong-btsan-sgam-po. For descriptions and details about it history, see Aris 1979, pp. 4-5; Dorje 1996, pp. 722-723; Pommaret 1998a, pp. 119-121.

[111]Aris 1979, p. 154.

convincing answer, if there is one, will have to await the appearance of more detailed sources, or new insights from the materials already consulted. What we can say for certain, however, is that Nyi-ma-grags-pa's arrangement was the true *editio princeps* of the first western-language translation of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1927). At the very least this fact stands as certain evidence of the enduring influence of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol*.

4. EDITIONS OF THE *BAR-DO THOS-GROL*

No attempt has been made so far to collect and collate the editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*, and thus the history of the different print and manuscript versions has remained relatively unknown. In this final section, then, I wish to survey the principal editions that are currently known to exist. In the descriptions that follow, we should take special note of the many blockprint versions of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's arrangement. The purpose of the survey is to provide a succint overview of some of the main points of the history of the texts themselves. It is my hope that such an overview will help to introduce preliminary material for a more balanced approach to the study of the *Bar-do thos-grol*; one in which the focus is as much on the role of historical development as it has been on content or doctrine.

[1] The first western-language translation of the *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo* (the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* by Kazi Dawa Samdup and Walter Y. Evans-Wentz) was based on four editions of the Tibetan texts:[112]

(i) An **illuminated manuscript** arranged as one work in two parts with thirteen folia of prayers. This text was from Darjeeling and in the possession of a young

[112] Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 68-73.

Zhwa-dmar-pa lama, who claimed that it had been passed down through his family for several generations. The Zhwa-dmar-pa connection here is particularly significant, since we know that leading followers of this Karma-pa subsect played active roles as teachers of some of the key Kar-gling lineage-holders. As we have seen, the important monasteries of Dwags-po Rtse-le and Kong-po Thang-'brog shared close alliances with several important hierarchs of this tradition.

(ii) A **blockprint** arranged as two separate texts without the prayers as an appendix belonging to Johan van Manen (1877-1943). This and the Darjeeling manuscript are said to be identical. The present location of the van Manen print is unfortunately not known, but several incomplete versions of the *Bar-do thos-grol* can be found in the Johan van Manen collection housed in the Library of the Kern Institute, Leiden.[113] The relationship between the two sets of van Manen prints is not clear. According to Henk Blezer, however, the Leiden witnesses appear to be older versions of the recent reprint currently available in Dharamsala, India (DH).[114] This Dharamsala collection is actually a photographic reproduction of a print from Bhutanese blocks prepared in 1943 and preserved in Spa-gro (B1, B1a, B4). The year 1943 was also the year of van Manen's death, which indicates the strong likelihood of the Leiden prints dating earlier than the Spa-gro edition. Hence, the Leiden prints may be identical to the van Manen collection discussed by Evans-Wentz in 1927. The two sets of van Manen texts were nevertheless derived from a single source—the same tradition represented by the Spa-gro edition—and this would have been the textual tradition of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa.

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[113]See Blezer 1997, p. 133. Texts calalogued as JVM 2740/H187, H12, and H19. See Appendix 3.
[114]E-mail communication of March 24, 1999.

(iii) A **blockprint** comprising seventeen individual texts, the titles of which are listed in a footnote by Evans-Wentz.[115] This edition was purchased in Rgyal-rtse (Gyantse) in 1919 by Major W. L. Campbell, who was then the British Political Representative in Sikkim. The blocks from which this print was struck were preserved at the monastery of Bstan-rgyas-gling in Lhasa, once affiliated with Bsam-yas but now abandoned.[116] Some prints from these same blocks are kept at the British Library.[117] It appears from the aforementioned list of titles and from the colophon of BL 3282 (text entitled *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*),[118] that the Bstan-rgyas-gling arrangement represents Nyi-ma-grags-pa's redaction. We had previously noted that the *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs* had been compiled at Bdud-'dul-sngags-pa-gling, a tantric chapel attached to the southern Aryapalo temple at Bsam-yas monastery. It is likely, therefore, that since Bstan-rgyas-gling had also been affiliated with Bsam-yas, its Kar-gling blocks might have

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[115] Evans-Wentz 1960, pp. 71-72n.1. The English titles given by Evans-Wentz correspond to the following Tibetan titles: (1) *Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs thos-grol chen-mo*, (2) *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa*, (3) *Sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub sems-dpa' rnams-la ra-mda' sbran-pa'i smon-lam*, (4) *Bar-do'i rtsa-tshig*, (5) *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyi smon-lam*, (6) *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo las srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*, (7) *Btags-grol phung-po rang-grol*, (8) *Bar-do'i smon-lam 'jigs-skyobs-ma*, (9) *'Chi-ltas mtshan-ma rang-grol*, (10) *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol*, (11) *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i gdams-pa srid-pa bar-do rang-grol*, (12) *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i lhan-thabs*, (13) *Brgyud-pa'i gsol-'debs*, (14) *'Chi-bslu 'jigs-pa rang-grol*, (15) *Zhi-khro'i klong-bshags brjod-pa rang-grol*, (16) *Btags-grol yid-bzhin nor-mchog*, (17) *Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*.

[116] This was the same edition upon which was based the first English translation of the *Rig-pa ngo-sprod gcer-mthong rang-grol*. See Evans-Wentz 1968, p. 85. Bstan-rgyas-gling monastery was the seat of the successive De-mo Qutuqtu, from whom were chosen some of the regents to the Dalai Lamas. On the troubled history of this monastery, see Bell 1931, pp. 162-164; Ferrari 1958, p. 93n.67; Wylie 1962, pp. 157n.387; Shakabpa 1984, p. 241; Goldstein 1989, pp. 63-64; Dorje 1996, p. 168. Waddell describes a ceremonial dance that was performed regularly at Bstan-rgyas-gling. See Waddell 1972, pp. 515-539. This was the *Stag-(mgrin-)dmar 'chams*, devoted to the deity Hayagriva. According to descriptions, it would appear that this drama closely resembles the popular Bhutanese dance of the Judgement of the Dead, called *rakṣa-mang-'chams*, or *rakṣa-mar-'chams*. Recall that the latter is said to be based on Karma-gling-pa's *Srid-pa bar-do'i dge-sdig rang-gzugs bstan-pa'i gdams-pa srid-pa bar-do rang-grol*. Is it possible that this Kar-gling text also inspired the Hayagriva dance at Bstan-rgyas-gling, and that the version used was the one included in Nyi-ma-grags-pa's collection of the *Bar-do thos-grol*?

[117] See BL 3270-3286. Unless otherwise note, all references to the Tibetan holdings at the British Library are based on information kindly supplied by Burkhard Quessel.

[118] See BL 3282 (shelfmark 19999n260), fol 6a5-6b2: *gsol 'debs kyi rim pa 'di sprul pa'i gter ston rigs 'dzin nyi ma grags pas bdud 'dul sngags pa gling du sbyar ba 'di yang zad mi shes pa gang gā'i rgyun ltar yun ring gnas par gyur cig // sarvamaṅgalaṃ*. This is the same colophon that we find in B1, B4, DH, and T3.

been derived from Nyi-ma-grags-pa's textual preparations at Bdud-'dul-sngags-pa-gling. Perhaps even the carving of the Bstan-rgyas-gling blocks had been commissioned originally by Nyi-ma-grags-pa himself. In this regard, we should take careful note that the Bstan-rgyas-gling printery supposedly housed print blocks originating from different locations, and thus the blocks for the Nyi-grags redaction might have been produced earlier at another institution before being moved to Bstan-rgyas-gling.[119] It is quite possible that this edition was used as the basis for the Spa-gro prints (B1, B4, DH).

(iv) A **manuscript** belonging to Kazi Dawa Samdup. No information provided.

[2] A small set of cursive **manuscripts** is preserved in the Lhasa collection of the India Office of the British Library (BL 684, identical to ms K25 no. 438 in Phillip Denwood's catalogue). Presuming an early date for this edition of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, Dieter Back used it as a base-text upon which to critically compare other variant editions.[120] Internal evidence, however, suggests that the texts were compiled in the nineteenth century with a likely connection to the tradition of the great Ris-med *gter-ston* Mchog-gyur Bde-chen-gling-pa (1829-1870).[121]

[3] During the Younghusband campaign of 1904,[122] a vast amount of original Tibetan manuscripts and blockprints were collected under the supervision of Lieut. Col. L. Austine Waddell (1854-1938) for the British museum and the India Office Library.

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[119] See Smith 1970c, p. 3n.16. Here, we should emphasize the usefulness of Tibetan printing lists (*par-tho*) and catalogues (*dkar-chag*) in determining dates, locations, and other pertinent details about important texts. According to one such list, the Bstan-rgyas-gling *Bar-do thos-grol* consisted of 275 separate xylographic blocks. See KCPT, fol. 236.6.

[120] See Back 1987, pp. 6-7.

[121] The closing sections of two of the collection's manuscripts refer to the names Rgyal-sras Sde-chen-kling[-gling]-pa [=Mchog-gyur-gling-pa], Nor-bu-dar-rgyas [=alternate name of Mchog-gyur-gling-pa?], and Jo-bo Tshe-dbang-dar-rgyas [=Mkhyen-brtse'i-dbang-po?]. See colophons in BL 684, no. 2, fol. 18r.1-5 and no. 4, fol. 11r.3-5 (Appendix 4). I wish to thank Burkhard Quessel for several digital images from this manuscript which he kindly made available to me.

[122] Younghusband 1910; Shakabpa 1984, pp. 205-223.

Among these materials was included a **manuscript** collection of the *Bar-do thos-grol*,[123] which I have argued—based on information provided in the colophon of BL 2201 (text entitled *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod gsal-'debs chen-mo*)—must have been prepared in the seventeenth century by either the third Pad-gling Gsung-sprul or one of his immediate successors. The collection most certainly represents a redaction of the Kar-gling transmission handed down at the monastery of Lho-brag Lha-lung.[124] Remember that it was this transmission that was received separately by Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa and Gter-bdag-gling-pa.

[4] The Waddell holdings at the British Library only cover one part of the private collection of Lieut. Waddell. Another significant selection of his Tibetan texts were acquired by the former Prussian state library in Berlin, the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz.[125] This collection includes a **blockprint** of the *Bar-do thos-grol* whose content bears a striking resemblance to the Spa-gro (B1, B1a, B4, DH) and Lahul-Spiti (T3) editions[126]—a fact that clearly suggests that all of these arrangements were derived from the single transmission of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa.

[5] In 1874, a publication list (*par-tho*) for the printing house of the Jo-nang-pa affiliated Dga'-ldan Phun-tshogs-gling was prepared by Zhwa-lu Ri-sbug-sprul-sku Blo-gsal-bstan-skyong (b.1804).[127] Two Kar-gling **blockprints** are found in that list: *Thos-grol*

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[123] 2185 pm OR 5355.1; 2198 pm OR 5355.10; 2199 pm OR 5355.11; 2200 pm OR 5355.12; 2201 pm OR 5355.13; 2203 pm OR 5355.15.

[124] Reference to what appears to be another Lha-lung edition is cited by Dieter Back. This was a photocopy of a blockprint belonging to Lama Sherab Gyaltsen Amipa of the Tibetan Institute in Rikon, Switzerland. According to the colophon of its fifth text—*Chos-spyod bag-chags rang-grol*—the collection was published at Lha-lung and preserved at the monastery of Bsam-gtan-gling (in Skyid-grong?). See Back 1987, *passim*, esp. p. 105: *grub thob kar ma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs po'i / sngags ban khams gsum yongs grol gyi lha lung chos kyi sde ru par du bskrun / par 'di sho rong 'ja' sa'i khrid bsam gtan gling dgon du bzhugs*. Contents listed in Appendix 3, cf. SGA.

[125] Schuh 1981, p. xxv.

[126] Compare the colophon of Wadd 87a (*Rdzogs-chen dgongs-pa rang-grol la khro-bos bar-do'i bsal-'debs*) to that of the *Khro-bo'i bar-do 'char-tshul bstan-pa* found in B1, B1a, B4, DH, and T3.

[127] According to Gene Smith the printing house appears to have been closed around 1700 and only re-opened in 1870 (e-mail correspondence of July 12, 1998).

yongs-rdzogs (*=Bar-do thos-grol*) and *Bag-chags rang-grol*.[128] We do not know the provenance of these Kar-gling texts, but the printing blocks from which they were struck must date from around the first half of the seventeenth century before the monastery was converted by the Dge-lugs-pa. It is possible that the texts represent the Lha-lung tradition of Tshul-khrims-rdo-rje, who is known to have been a student of Jo-nang-sprul-sku Tāranātha (1575-1634).[129]

[6] A rather extensive collection of Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* **manuscripts** is held in the Potala library in Lhasa.[130] Unfortunately, the texts are kept under seal and permission to access the holdings is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. Thus, we do not yet know the provenance of this Kar-gling collection. Nevertheless, I believe it is safe to assume that at least some of the texts would have come from the special transmissions received by the fifth Dalai Lama (see discussion in Chapter 4).[131]

[7] Josef Kolmaś has provided brief details on a fragmented and incomplete **manuscript** collection of some *Bar-do thos-grol* texts extant in the Library of the Oriental Institute, Prague.[132] However, not enough information is available to determine their provenance.

[8] The only *Bar-do thos-grol* collection that is explicitly identified in the bibliographic record as having been edited by Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa himself is the **blockprint** edition preserved at Khang-gsar-rdzong in Gar-zhwa, Lahul-Spiti (T3). This particular print was prepared in the nineteenth or early twentieth century from blocks whose origins remain unclear at this point. The important fact, however, is that the content and textual

[128]Chandra 1981, vol. 1, p. 31, nos. 632-633.
[129]See GKCB, p. 656. Incidentally, Nyi-ma-grags-pa spent considerable time in Rgyang-yul which is near this important printing house.
[130]See the inventory of Dom-po-pa Thub-bstan-rgyal-mtshan in PLKC, pp. 127-130.
[131]Evidence for this can be drawn from a comparative analysis of the texts listed in both the *gsan-yig* of the fifth Dalai Lama and the Polala catalogue.
[132]See Kolmaś 1969, pp. 49-50, nos. 34-36. Titles are listed as follows: [*Chos-nyid bar-do'i gsal-'debs* ?], *Khro-bo'i bar-do bzhugs-so*, and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod gsal-'debs bzhugs-so*, respectively.

sequence of this edition is essentially identical to the Spa-gro facsimile collections (B1, B1a, B4, DH), which lends further support to the claim that both sets represent the actual arrangement of Nyi-ma-grags-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol*.

[9] As I have noted on several occasions, the printing blocks of the Spa-gro[133] edition were carved in 1943 through the efforts of Lo-phyag Nor-bu-bzang-po[134] and preserved at the Bskyed-chu lha-khang. My feeling is that this **blockprint** was based on the Bstan-rgyas-gling edition, which itself was probably based on an earlier edition prepared by either the first Nyi-grags Mchog-sprul or the third Rdzogs-chen-pa. Several reprints from these blocks (B1, B1a, and DH) are now the most widely available editions of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in India.

[10] The **blockprint** edition from Bum-thang (B2) is based on an edition of the *Bar-do thos-grol* that was originally arranged for publication by Nges-don-bstan-'dzin at Rdzogs-chen monastery. The actual Bhutanese blocks themselves appear to have been prepared in the water-male-dragon year 1952, commemorating the death of king 'Jigs-med-dbang-phyug, and subsequently preserved at the royal palace of Bkra-shis-chos-gling. This edition is clearly connected to Nyi-ma-grags-pa's tradition.

[11] The **blockprint** edition from Sgang-tog, Sikkim (S1) appears to have been arranged at the behest of one Kun-bzang-rgya-mtsho and printed under the auspices of the Do-lung Spyi-dpon (in Sikkim?).[135]

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[133] As we saw in Chapter 4, there is evidence suggesting that the *Bar-do thos-grol* had already been introduced in the Spa-gro (and Shar) region sometime in the first decades of the sixteenth century through the activities of Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan (1466-1540). He had received the Kar-gling transmission in Gtsang-rong in 1485 from a certain Rong-ston-chen-po Nam-mkha'-rdo-rje.

[134] It was Gene Smith's impression that this individual was a student of Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (1904-1987) and that he had some connection with the house of Lha-rgya-ri in Tibet, perhaps through his son who married into this family (e-mail communication of June 29, 1998).

[135] See S1, fol. 51a.6 (repeated in KS, pp. 4-5): *namo guru śānta krodha maṇḍala bhyaḥ rab 'byams dkyil 'khor rgya mtsho'i rigs brgya'i bdag / zhi khro'i dkyil 'khor sgrub pa'i zab chos mchog / 'brel tshad don ldan sangs rgyas padma'i gsungs / grub thob Karma gling pas spyan drangs pa'i / zab chos thos pas grol ster rdo rje'i tshig / sngag ba / kun bzang rgya mtshos dge bskul gyis / sbyin po'i bdag po do*

[12] The Sgang-tog arrangement served as the basis for the recently calligraphed manuscript edition published by Kalsang Lhundrup (KS). The two editions S1 and KS are thus derived from an identical textual source, the syncretic Zhe-chen transmissions of Dil-mgo Mkhyen-rtse Bkra-shis-dpal-'byor (1910-1991).

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lung spyi dpon nas / bsam sbyor dag pas par gyi gleg bam bskrun / dge ba 'di dang dus gsum rnam dkar mthus / Bstan 'dzin zhabs brtan bstan gshed ming mthar byas / rgyal bstan dar zhing skye 'gro'i bsde skyid 'phel / mar gyur 'gro kun mngon sangs rgyas gyur bsngo / ces rnam dkar sgrub pa pos rten bcas bskul ngor mkhyen sprul maṅgala śribhutis bris pa dge.

Conclusions

While looking back over this study, I now sense more sharply than ever the difficulty of giving clear and unambiguous answers to the riddles posed by my sources. I have had to accept that many of the statements that I made about the history of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol* may not necessarily correspond to the past as such, to what "really happened". That past is available to me only through fragments and traces left behind in texts, and those texts had been determined in large measure by their own unique function and purpose within very specific contexts often contrary to my own. Thus, among all the statements that could have been made about these texts, the conclusions that I offered—though derived from a carefully selected and balanced review of the existing data—may have been nothing more than my own *picture* of the past; an educated impression of a perceived unity of "facts" that could be said to be neither entirely true nor entirely false. To be sure, the integrity of my impressions could be guaranteed only by the questions posed and the evidence I chose to highlight. That being said, I hope that more complete evidence will eventually come to light and that the story presented here might inspire scholars in the future to ask different questions, to clear up some of the areas of doubt, or perhaps even to reject my picture altogether. In light of this, I believe a few concluding remarks and suggestions for further research are in order.

Several years ago while conducting preliminary research for this project in several Tibetan communities in India, I asked many lamas and monks about the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol*. Invariably, I was told how frightening the bardo could be and about the importance of studying the bardo doctrines. But when I would ask again specifically about the *Bar-do thos-grol* itself, I often met with blank expressions. A few monks, however, told me about the first time they actually "read" the text, which was

almost always at a very young age.[1] Interestingly, and for reasons still unknown to me, in those cases, the *Thos-grol* had served as a sort of primer for learning the Tibetan language. Other monks promised to show me their own personal copy of the "*Bar-do thos-grol*". When I finally had the chance to see these copies, I was disappointed to learn that they were never Karma-gling-pa's *Bar-do thos-grol*, but rather some prayer or short text written by a local lama from the monk's home village. I was faced with a perplexing question. What did all of this mean? It was clear first of all that the title *Bar-do thos-grol* meant something entirely different to me than it did to the Tibetans I met in India. For most of them the title referred generally to any doctrine that had bardo as its main focus, and particularly any doctrine intended to assuage fear and anxiety *in* the bardo. For a few others, the title evoked childhood memories of learning to read for the first time, or of the guiding advice of beloved teachers back home. But for me *Bar-do thos-grol* meant a particular body of literature vaguely fixed in time and place—a hidden treasure believed to have been discovered in the fourteenth century by a *gter-ston* named Karma-gling-pa and rediscovered in the early twentieth century by Walter Y. Evans-Wentz. For me, the *Bar-do thos-grol* was the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

I have since determined that in Tibet the *Bar-do thos-grol* must have undergone what I playfully call the "kleenex effect". In other words, the *Bar-do thos-grol* started out in history with a distinctive identity, a "brand name" so to speak; but, over time and with repeated and widespread use, that brand name turned into a generic label for all similar products. *Bar-do thos-grol* thus became a floating referent for a sort of "public domain" type of doctrine. Consequently, Tibetans nowadays think of it as a generic, but no less

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[1]Interestingly, there is ample historical evidence in the biographical literature indicating that it was standard for students to receive the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* transmissions at a young age or at the time of their monastic ordination. As examples from my own study, I might cite Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, Zur-chen Chos-dbyings-rang-grol, Gter-bdag-gling-pa, and O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin.

effective, teaching on bardo. As such, for Tibetans it has no real history in the sense of being tied to a specific compositor and historical tradition.

Oddly enough, a similar impression has emerged and persisted in Europe and America, where the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* has been typically perceived in abstraction as ancient scripture conveying a universal wisdom. This view, like the perspective of contemporary Tibetans, has tended toward an implicit denial of the relevance of the text's history. We cannot help noticing that even in academic studies on the *Book of the Dead* few attempts have been made to explore new layers of the primary sources. The authors of both popular and scholarly books on this subject have been satisfied to interpret the texts along similar lines, consistently ignoring the particulars of the formation and distribution of these texts in time and place. Questions of the meaning and significance of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* must be answered by evidence from its history. As I have said before, it was for the purpose of recovering that history that I undertook this project.

We have seen that the Kar-gling tradition originated in Dwags-po sometime in the fourteenth century, was institutionalized in Kong-po in the last decades of the fifteenth century, and was subsequently disseminated throughout Tibet, particularly in the southern districts of Lho-rgyud and the eastern region of Khams. The tradition was transmitted in two basic streams. The first was passed between multiple lineages leading from the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer, while the second came through a single lineage emanating from the obscure lama Mgon-po-rdo-rje of Kong-po. Nyi-zla-'od-zer's transmission seems to have consisted mainly of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* and of specific instructions pertaining to the *Bar-do drug-khrid* and *'Og-sgo bde-chen*. The alternate transmission of Mgon-po-rdo-rje, on the other hand, consisted essentially of the *Dbang-bzhi yongs-rdzogs*. His lineage appears to have had some special hold on the *Bar-do thos-grol* transmissions.

Between the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the *Bar-do thos-grol* was received principally through the hierarchs of Dwags-po Rtse-le and Kong-po Thang-'brog monasteries in southeastern Tibet. The particular character of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, distinct from the texts of the larger *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*, was perhaps initially formulated at these two ecumenical institutions. Eventually, the tradition was passed to Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol at Dar-rgyas-chos-sding monastery, which in that period was the principal center for the practice of Rdzogs-chen in central Tibet. From all of these institutions, it was transmitted through the Pad-gling Gsung-sprul and Thugs-sras incarnations at Lha-lung monastery in Lho-brag. Historical evidence suggests that the Kar-gling tradition maintained at this important southern establishment held the primary, if not exclusive, transmission of the *Bar-do thos-grol* in Tibet throughout the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. This might explain why we do not find some of the most distinctive texts of the *Bar-do thos-grol*—namely, the *Chos-nyid bar-do gsal-'debs* and *Srid-pa bar-do'i ngo-sprod*—in any of the textual collections preserved at Kaḥ-thog, Dpal-yul, or other eastern Tibetan institutions. In this context, however, we should not ignore the fragmented evidence of an earlier and alternative Bka'-brgyud tradition fostered at Zur-mang in eastern Tibet, or of a possible lineage in the Rong district of Gtsang as early as 1485.

The strong Lha-lung affiliation meant that the *Bar-do thos-grol* tradition must have been known also in eastern Bhutan at that particular stage in its history. As Aris has pointed out, the monasteries of both areas were in constant contact until recent times. In Tibet, this Lha-lung transmission was passed in two streams through the Pad-gling incarnations residing in Lho-brag. The first was transmitted through the successors of Sprul-sku Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, including most notably Gter-bdag-gling-pa and his immediate family at Smin-grol-gling in central Tibet. The second line was passed through

Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa and his lineal descendants at Stag-mo-sgang and Rdzogs-chen-dgon in Khams. Both streams—Smin-gling and Nyi-grags—converged in the person of O-rgyan-bstan-'dzin, Nyi-ma-grags-pa's son. But it was Nyi-ma-grags-pa himself who, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, first standardized the arrangement of the *Bar-do thos-grol*. It was his redaction that was used, quite unintentionally, as the basis for the first western-language translation by Kazi Dawa Samdup in 1919. As we know, this translation was christened by its editor, Walter Evans-Wentz, with the title *Tibetan Book of the Dead*.

As I announced in the introduction to this study, I set out in this project to begin to explore the origin and circulation of the texts accompanying the rituals of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* and *Bar-do thos-grol*. In so doing, I wanted to avoid some of the pitfalls of earlier studies by focusing my attention on the localized details of lineage and institutional history. I was convinced that a systematic examination of such details ought to be the first task in reconstructing the larger picture. I was not interested, therefore, in generalizing too broadly about attitudes and practices pertaining to death and the dead among the Tibetan communities that developed and used the texts and rituals under discussion. In the bewildering diversity of manuscripts and blockprints associated with this tradition, I saw clear indications of development over time and a history that could only begin to be exposed after a meticulous sorting of data and piecing together of fragmented and often conflicting details. Careful and patient attention to the diverging contents of the numerous collections, to the scattered and all too frequently deceptive references in the individual texts themselves, and to the patterns of relations exposed in the seemingly endless list of personal names of teachers and their disciples revealed the hazy contours of a dynamic and complicated history that has never been fully articulated by either Tibetan or western scholars. I believe in the end that the main contribution offered by the present study is an

open vantage point from which to begin to clarify the mysteries of this story. That said, I am reminded of a particularly fitting comment by Jonathan Z. Smith that the true role of a historian is "to complicate, not to clarify".[2]

Some readers may respond that the detail of this study eclipses the more general questions of the religious and social meanings of death and funeral ritual in Tibet. My attention to such broader questions was restricted largely by the limitations of the sources consulted. As noted at the beginning of this study, I relied primarily on several types of archival and historical record, as well as the ritual books themselves, in tracing the diverse movements of the Kar-gling textual tradition through time and space. On one hand, the archival documents such as the *gsan-yig*, *brgyud-rim*, and *dkar-chag* frequently provide only the bare minimum of information pertaining to the details of text and transmission. The ritual books, on the other hand, usually present only an outline of practices within a circumscribed monastic community. Such books were largely created for and by monks already familiar with the accompanying rituals, and thus these books only indirectly illuminate the ritual life of the monastery, and rarely if ever shed light on the attitudes and behavior of Tibetan society at large. What needs to be creatively explored, then, are the ways in which the beliefs and practices surrounding death in premodern Tibet might have been integral to both daily life and the sweep of broader religious and social movements. It is regrettable, however, that the success of such a significant scholarly enterprise is still to this day compromised by huge gaps in our knowledge of Tibetan ritual and religion. In my opinion, western scholarship has been too apt to rely on neatly formulated conceptual paradigms and static two-dimensional models of Tibetan religious culture. In reality, Tibetan religion was, and continues to be, dynamic, contradictory, and thoroughly untidy. Specifically, in terms of attitudes and practices pertaining to the dead in Tibet, what is

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[2]J. Smith 1993, p. 290.

needed most is a great deal more nuancing and shading of the regional distinctiveness of death traditions throughout Tibetan history.

Again, in reviewing the range of materials covered in the course of writing this story, I am struck by just how much research is still required to understand the true depth of context within which the Kar-gling tradition was developed and transmitted. In addition to the suggestions above, a critical study is much needed of Tibetan books, both manuscript and printed, with special focus on the sociocultural circumstances involved in their production. Texts are always produced with specific audiences in mind, and thus they never exist in isolation from their social and political environments. Invariably, throughout Tibetan history, the production and transmission of literary works has necessitated the close collaboration between compositor and institution. Therefore, we are also in great need of a thorough history of patronage, and of relations between the monasteries and local laity. In the present case in particular, we should consider, for example, a more advanced study of the monasteries of Rtse-le Gong-'og and Thang-'brog 'Od-gsal-rtse for the light that might be shed on relations in the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries between the ecclesiastic and secular leaders of Dwags-po and Kong-po, as well as between the Rnying-ma-pa and Bka'-brgyud orders in those provinces. More precisely, we might uncover the events that led to the formation and reformation of these two notoriously ecumenical institutions, and also learn about the precise role the *Bar-do thos-grol* played in the liturgical lives of the local population.

As for the later history of the *Bar-do thos-grol*, we could surely benefit from a thorough study of the Khams-pa tradition, particularly in Sde-dge and general vicinity. The sociopolitical history of the monasteries in this area is a rich topic that has been relatively neglected in the secondary literature. There is much need for research on the monastic communities and liturgical customs of, for example, Kaḥ-thog Rdo-rje-gdan,

which was arguably the oldest and most significant ecclesiastic institution in the history of the Rnying-ma-pa in eastern Tibet. The later Rdzogs-chen monastery also deserves focused attention. In this context, we can only hope that more evidence soon comes to light about Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa, who, as we have seen, was certainly an influential and powerful presence not only in Khams, but also throughout much of Tibet and Bhutan in the late seventeenth century. Nyi-ma-grags-pa's hostile reputation, alleged violent activities, and posthumous and deliberate exclusion from history are subjects that are certainly worth further investigation. In the end, no matter what the focus, questions of historical context must always prevail.

Appendix 1:
Brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus nor-bu'i phreng-ba

Tibetan Text

[28] zhi khro sku gsum lha la phyag 'tshal lo : zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las / bar do thos grol gyi chos skor 'di la brgyud pa ni / dad ldan skyes bu rnams yid ches par bya ba'i phyir / chu 'go gangs la thug pa ltar / kun bzang nga yi bar du bshad / ces gsungs pas / rgyal ba dgongs pa'i brgyud pa dang / rig 'dzin brda'i brgyud pa dang / gang zag snyan khungs kyi brgyud pa dang gsum mo / brgyud pa'i dgos pa ni / yid ches shing khungs btsun par byed pa yin / nyi zla kha sbyor las /

gsang chen nges pa'i bka' 'di la /
lo rgyus don gyi ma bshad na /
yid mi ches pa'i skyon du 'gyur /
zhes gsungs pas /

dang po rgyal ba dgongs pa'i brgyud pa la gsum ste / chos sku kun bzang yab yum / drug pa rdo rje 'chang chen / ston pa rdo rje sems dpa' dang gsum yin te / chos sku kun bzang yab yum ni / dbyings rang bzhin gyi rnam par dag pa / 'og min chos kyi [29] dbyings kyi pho brag du : 'dus ma byas pa ye nas lhun grub / snang stong thabs dang shes rab mnyams par bzhugs pa'i / bcom ldan 'das dpal kun bzang yab yum yin te / de yang chos sku dri bral ci'i ngo bor yang ma grub pa la / gdul bya'i snang ngor / thugs rje zhal phyag gi rnam par / sku mtshan dang dpe byad du 'bar bar bzhengs te / spros pa'i mtshan ma thams cad dang bral ba'i dang las / gnas 'og min chos kyi dbyings kyi ye shes / 'od lnga 'khrugs pa'i pho brang du bzhugs so / bcom ldan 'das dpal kun tu bzang po dgongs pa yongs su rdzogs pa / drug po rdo rje 'chang chen po la gtad nas / spyi shugs chen por byin gyis rlabs / de ltar byin gyis rlabs nas / gdul bya rnams la thugs rje rang babs su

byon zhing / gdul bya'i mang yul du sku mtshan dang dpe byad dpag tu med par ston te / mdzad pa'i rnam par sprul pa mang po las bsdus te smos pa ni / [30] thugs rje che la thabs mkhas kyis bcom ldan 'das drug pa rdo rje 'chang chen po nyid do / bcom ldan 'das drug pa rdo rje 'chang chen po nyid kyis dgongs pa ston pa rdo rje sems dpa' nyid la gtad cing byin gyis brlabs so / ston pa bcom ldan 'das rdo rje sems dpa' de nyid spros bral chen po'i klong las / thugs rang byung gyi ye shes rnam pa g.yos pas / longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku rang byung du byon zhing / ye shes chen po 'di 'od zer gyi 'phro 'dus / mdzad pa sum cu so drug gi sku rang byung du gnas pa 'od kyi thig le las / gnas phun sum tshogs pa drug cu tham par gnas par bya / sangs rgyas kyi sku dpag tu med pa / spyan gyi dkyil 'khor la mngon par snang nas / de dag kyang nyid kyi 'od zer rigs lnga'i sangs rgyas su 'dus shing rig pa la mngon par byung ngo / de'i tshe nyid kyi ljags 'od kyi snang ba las / rang byung gyi yi ge'i sgra rang byung du bab ste / sems can thams cad bla na med pa'i byang chub la 'god do / zhes lan gsum du blang bas / nyid kyi thugs las rang byung gi ye shes la / chos nyid kun tu bzang po rang byung nas / rang byung 'dzad med kyi thugs rjes phyogs bcur 'phros so / de'i ngang las / bcom ldan 'das dpal rdo rje sems [31] dpa'i sku / 'khor grangs med pa nyid kyi longs spyod du 'dus nas / rdzogs pa chen po'i sku 'od du 'bar ba de bzhin du / rigs lnga'i sangs rgyas la sogs grangs med pa so so'i dkyil 'khor dang bcas pa / nyid kyi longs spyod du 'dus pa dang / rdzogs pa chen po'i sku 'od du 'bar ba lan bcu gnyis su byung bas / chos thams cad la longs spyod cing rdzogs pas 'di tshe chos thams cad kyi dmigs bsdus dang bral ba nyid do / de nas thugs rje'i yul du ma la dgongs pa rang shar du byung ngo / de'i tshe 'od kyi bkod pa legs pa'i gnas / khang bu brtsegs pa na ston pa shes rig gi rgyal po rdo rje sems dpa' zhes bya ba / dkyil 'khor gyi mnga' bdag tu byung ste / sku gsung thugs rang byung gi ston pa'i ngang nas / mi g.yo ba chen po nyid du byung ngo / de yang 'pho 'gyur ma yin zhing / bde ba'i zhing khams thams cad kyang mngon par dga' ba nas / sangs rgyas brjod kyis mi langs ba dag tu rang byung gi ye shes rang gsal gyi rang la rang bzhugs so / bcom ldan 'das ston pa rdo rje sems dpa' nyid kyis dgongs pa

/ rig 'dzin chen po dga' rab rdo rje la byin gyis brlabs so / de yan chad rgyal ba dgongs pa'i brgyud pa zhes bya'o / de nas [32] rig 'dzin rig pa'i brgyud pa gtan la dbab par bya ste / ston pa rdo rje sems dpa'i byin rlabs las / sangs rgyas mya ngan las 'das nas / lo sum brgya drug cu tham pa nas / rdo rje gdan gyi nub phyogs dha na ko sha'i gling / dpal bde byed brtsegs pa'i gtsug lag khang / bkod pa phun sum tshogs pa dang ldan par yab rgyal po uparaja dang / yum bstun mo snang ba gsal ba'i 'od ces bya ba gnyis las / sras mo suddhama zhes bya ba yod pa rab tu byung nas / dge slong ma mdzad pa zhig nub phyogs rgya mtsho'i gling bar zhig tu / 'jag skyil phub nas g.yog mo dhakki bde ma'i snying ldan ma bya ba cig dang lhun cig tu chos la gnas pa'i tshe / nub gcig gi rmi lam la / mi dkar po shel gyi bum pa la rigs lnga'i sa bon gyis spras pa zhig spyi bor gzhag pa rmis / de la brtan nas lha lcam lus ma bde / dus la bab nas pha med pa'i bu cig rtsib logs g.yas pa'i go bar nas 'khrungs pa dang / dge slong [ma] las pha med pa'i bu 'di 'dra ba zhig skyes / zhes smre sngags kyi tshig mang po bsdus pas / g.yog mos / kye 'di ni sangs rgyas kyi sras dam pa zhig yin [33] no byas kyang ma nyan nas thal dong du dor du bcug / 'od dang sgra dang 'ja' la sogs pa sangs rgyas 'jig rten du byon pa'i ltas mang po byung bas / de nas dge slong ma'i zhal nas / nga'i bu de sangs rgyas kyi rnam 'phrul zhig yin na da rung ma drongs par yod do / ltos dang gsungs pas / zhag gsum lon pa'i nang par bltas pas / sku stod thal ba'i gseb nas drang sang nge ba / zhal 'dzum me le bzhugs pas / dar dkar gyis lcibs nas blangs / sbos chus khrus byas pas / bar snang nas lha rnams kyis khrus gsol ba dang / shis pa brjod pa la sogs pa ngo mtshar ba'i ltas mang po byung / de nas gces spras kyis bskyangs pas / yul mi rnams kyi thal ba'i dkyil du sbas kyang bu chung 'di ma shi bas / mtshan yang ro langs thal mdog du btags / de nas lo bdun lon nas bu chung gyis nga rgya gar gyi paṇḍita rnams kyi tsar bskyol dang / tshig mi bde ba'i dri ba byed rgyu yod gsungs / mi rnams kyis khyod lo bdun las ma lon / so gcig yang ma brjes pas / nga la chos gtam byed rgyu yod gsungs / de nas myes po uparāja dang / paṇḍita lnga brgya dang mjal / ro langs [34] thal mdog gis phar la dris pas / paṇḍita thams

cad kyis lan ma thebs / tshur la dris pas thams cad la len thogs pa med pa byung / de nas paṇḍita thams cad kyi dad pa byas / zhabs spyi bor blang pos bu tsha dga' rab cig tu 'dug gsungs pas dga' rab rdo rje btags / paṇḍita thams cad kyis prajñabhava zhes bya ba btags / de nas byang phyogs ri bo nyi ma rab tu snang byed ches bya bar / mi ma yin mang du tshogs pa'i gnas su lo sum cu so gnyis la ting nge 'dzin bzhugs pas / sa g.yo ba dang / sgra dang / 'od dang me tog gi char phab cing / khyad par mu stegs kyi ston pa rnams nyen par byas so / mu stegs kyi rgyal po gcig gis na re / 'di ni nang pa sangs rgyas pa'i bstan pa 'phel zhing rgyas pa / phyi pa mu stegs pa'i bstan pa nyams par byed pa yin pas 'di sod cig ces bsgos te / gsod pa'i thabs ci byas kyang thabs ma rnyed / slob dpon dga' rab rdo rje nam mkha' dbyings su gshegs pas / mu stegs kyi rgyal po 'khor dang bcas pa ngo mtshar skyes shing phyag byas nas nang pa'i bstan pa la zhugs so / de nas dga' rab rdo rje sngar gyi sangs rgyas kyis gsungs pa'i chos sde snod ma lus pa dang / khyad par du rang byung rdzogs [35] pa chen po shwa lo ka 'bum phrag drug cu rtsa bzhi thugs la mnga' ba rnams / ri ma la ya rin po che srung pa bstan pa rgyas byed kyi tse mor mkha' 'gro bde ba'i ro ldan ma dang / bde byed yon tan mtha' yas ma dang / slob dpon dga' rab rdo rje dang gsum gyis / lo gsum bar du yi ge dkar chags la btab nas / dhākki mngon byung gi phug par / rgyas btab cing mkha' 'gro ma la gnyer du gtad de bzhugs su bcol / slob dpon chen po rdo rje gdan gyi byang shar mtshams / dpag tshad lnga 'das pa na / dur khrod chen po bsil ba'i tshal zhes bya bar dgongs pa la bzhugs nas / mkha' 'gro ma rnams la chos bstan to / de'i tshe te'i dus na / rgya nag shing rtsa'i gling na / khyim bdag dge ba'i blo can zhes bya ba dang / yum snang gsal ma zhes bya ba'i bu / śri singha zhes bya ba / sbyangs pa'i yon tan dang ldan pa zhig yod pa de / dus re zhig grong khyer gser gling zhes bya bar 'gro snyoms nas / kha nub la gtad de / rnga mong nag po stobs ldan la zhon nas / mtha' 'khob kyi dkyil sleb pa'i tshe / 'phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug steng gi nam [36] mkha' la dngos su byon nas / kye skal ldan rigs kyi bu / 'bras bu nges pa'i snying po 'dod na / dur khrod chen po bsil ba'i tshul du song zhig ches lung bstan pas

bslab sbyang dang / skang mgyogs dang rdzu 'phrul gyis shugs kyi dur khrod chen po bsil ba'i tshul du / slob dpon chen po dga' rab rdo rje dang mjal / yang dag pa'i gdams pa zhig bstan du gsol zhes zhus pas / las dang skal par ldan pa gzigs nas / man ngag rin po che snying po'i gdams pa thams cad gnang zhing / khyad par du rdzogs pa chen po'i rgyud sde 'bum phrag drug cu rtsa bzhi'i don ma lus pa lo nyer lna'i bar du zhun 'thar bcad nas / nyams su blangs pas / rtog pa'i gdengs dang ldan par 'gyur / slob dpon chen po śri singha nyid / dur khrod so so'i gling la dgongs pa la bzhugs so / de'i dus na / bdag 'dra o rgyan gyi mkhan po padma 'byung gnas la / gsang sngags bsgrub sde mtha' dga pa'i / smin grol dbang dang bcas pa khyad par du rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po'i chos sde tha dag pa'i snying po yang zhun bcud du dril ba'i / a ti bla med / yang dag gser mdog / snying thig gsal ba [37] nyams lan gyi skor rnams / bum pa mtshan ldan du byos te / gang zhig ma zag pa'i tshul du gnas dur khrod chen po so so'i gling gi dbus na / rang byung gi mchod rten rgya che ba / srid du ring ba / 'khor lo bdugs dang bcas pa / rgyu rin po che gser dngul la byas pa / 'od zer dpag tu med pa 'phro ba'i drung na / slob dpon chen po śri singha zhes bya ba thabs mkhas rje dang ldan pa'i mdun du / grogs kyi dam pa paṇḍita dri med bshes gnyen dang / rgyal ba ye shes mdo zhes bya ba sbyangs pa'i yon tan dang ldan pa dang / bdag 'dra o rgyan padma dang mched grogs gsum gnad thog tu gnad dbab nas byin gyis brlabs pa'o / de lta rig 'dzin brda brgyud kyi lo rgyus gtan la phab nas / gang zag snyan khungs kyi lo rgyus kyang o rgyan rin po che padma 'byung gnas kyi drung du chos rgyal khri srong lde'u btsan yab sras dang / lo tsā ba cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan la sogs pa rnams kyis gser g.yu'i maṇḍala phul nas zhus / kye slob dpon chen po lags / khyed kyi thugs rje'i bka' drin la dus skabs [38] ma mchis shing / sngon chad kyang theg pa phyi nang gi chos thams cad kyi 'gag don gcig tu dril nas tshe gcig la sangs rgyas pa'i chos / yun ring por dka' spyad snying rus kyi 'bad rtsol las ma ltos par / thos pa tsam gyis grol ba'i chos zab cing nyung la don 'dus pa cig bka' stsal du gsol / zhes gdung shugs drug pos mchi ma krug cing gsol bas slob dpon chen po dar cig dgongs pa

la bzhugs nas bka' stsal pa / kye mnga' bdag rgyal po yab sras rje slon mams kyi thugs bzhed ltar / dpal kun tu bzang po'i dgongs pa mngon du byung ba rdzogs pa chen po'i rgyud 'bum phrag drug cu rtsa bzhi'i gnad 'gag gcig tu dril nas thos pa tsam gyis ngan song gi skye sgo gcod pa / go ba tsam gyis bde chen gyi sa la bshegs pa / don yid la byed pa mams ni lhun gyis grub pa'i rig 'dzin phyir mi ldog pa'i sa la gshegs par byed pa / gang 'brel thams cad don chen dang ldan pa'i chos de lta bu zhig bdag pa yod kyang / gdul bya blo chung theg dman gyi rigs skal med log lta the tshom can gyi blor mi shongs nas slar skur pa 'debs pas ngan song 'phan pas na / khyed [39] mams kyis rlung phyogs tsam yang gzhan la ma bsgrag cig / ma 'ongs snyigs dus kyi don du gter la sba bar bya'o / zhes gsungs nas / chos thams cad kyi mdo 'gag dril nas / zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol zhes bya bar mtshan gsol te / ma 'ongs snyigs dus kyi 'gro ba bsod nams dman pa mams la dgongs te / dwags la sgam po'i ri lha bran gar byed pa 'dra ba'i gnas su gter du sbas nas / skal ldan las 'phro can la smon lam btab pa ni / de nyid kyi bde chen rang grol las

e ma chos mams kun gyi mthar thug pa /
yang gsang bla med kun gyi snying po mchog /
sdug bsngal bde ba chen por grol ba'i thabs /
da lta mngon par sangs rgyas rang thob yin /
dus gsum rgyal ba'i dgongs pa snying po'i don /
bcud bsdus mar gyi snying po yang zhun 'di /
bdag 'dra o rgyan padma 'byung gnas gyis /
phyi rabs 'gro ba mams kyi don du bkod /
su la ma spel rin chen gter du sbas /
ma 'ongs snyigs ma dus kyi tha ma la /
lnga bcu khar la dus kyi tha ma'i dus /

de dus 'di 'dra'i [40] gdams pa med pa kun / ngan song gnas su 'gro bar the tshom med /

de phyir snyigs ma'i sems can la phan phyir /

yi ger btab nas sgam po'i ri la sbas / de dus snying gi bu mchog skal ldan gcig /

pha la grub thob nyi zla'i ming can 'byung /

karma gling pa zhes bya snying stobs can /

brla g.yas sme ba ye shes spyan drangs mtshan /

'brug sbrul lo pa las kyis dpa' po'i rigs /

skal ldan skye bu de dang 'di 'phrad shog /

zhes gsungs pa ltar /

gter ston karma gling pa'i 'khungs yul ni / dwags po ni dwags po'i stod khyer grub chen nyi zla sangs rgyas kyi sras po kun gyi che shos / lung bstan dang rten 'brel 'dzoms nas / dwags la sgam po gdar gyi ri bo lha bran gar byed pa 'dra ba nas / zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi skor rnams / gter nas gsang ste gdan drangs / gzhan yang padma zhi khro la sogs kyang gter nas bton / gter lung gi jo mo'i lung bstan rten 'brel 'chug pas kha smras kyang byung / 'on kyang sras gcig ni yod / dgongs pa rang grol spel ba'i dus la ma sleb pa la shog ser gcig [41] bstan pas / sku tshe la bar chad byung zhes pa yang grags / yon tan dpag tu med pa thugs la mnga' zhing / 'phrin las gang la'ang thogs pa med pa'i bdag nyid sku gshegs khar rig nas / sang gnang tsam la nga'i lus la me tog padma'i ri mo mang po dod nas yod gsung pa dang / mngon shes kyang mang du gsungs / de nas phyir lo sku gshegs khar / sras la dgongs pa rang grol gyi dbang dang bka' lung gnang nas / gzhan su la'ang ma bstan / nyi zla'i ming can skyes bu dam pa zhig la chos 'di gtod / de'i 'gro don rgya cher spyod pa 'byung gsungs / zhes sogs lung bstan man du mdzad nas gshegs so / karma gling pa nyid kyi yab / grub thob nyi zla sangs rgyas yin pa / dgung lo brgya dang nyi shu bzhugs pa yin no / karma gling pa de'i sras nyi zla chos rje ni chung ngu nas chos la dad cing / thugs rab che ba / kun gyi yid du 'ong ba / byams snying rje

byang chub kyi sems dang ldan pa / yon tan tha dag la sbyangs pa / khyad par du'ang rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po'i chos don la mkhas pa / dgung lo bcu nas chos gsungs pa dang / dbang [42] bskur la mkhas pa / gdul bya dang ba 'dren cing / 'gro ba'i don rgya chen mdzad pa cig byung / dwags po nas / lung po phyogs su phyag phebs / bla ma rin po che suryacandrarasmi dang mjal / rmi lam dang rten 'brel 'grigs pas / zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi skor / bla ma nyi zla 'od zer la phul / khyed lung bstan nas zin / brgyud pa gsum pa yin / ngas chos 'di rlung gi phyogs tsam yang su la bstan pa med / brgyud pa gsum gyi bar du gcig brgyud gces / brgyud pa gsum nas 'gro don rgya chen 'byung gsungs pa yod khyed kyang lo drug gi bar du su la'ang ma bstan / khyed rang nyams su longs / lo drug song nas gzhan la ston pa dang 'gro don rgya chen 'ong / karma gling pa'i 'gro don byang phyogs rgyas / zhes gsungs pas / byang phyogs su bstan pa dar rgyas su 'ong ba'i lung bstan yod / zab chos 'di'i 'og sgo bde chen kyi skor ni / lo bcu'i bar du su la ma bstan / de nas ston dang bar chad las grol ba yin gsungs / de'i slob ma ni bla ma rin po che suryacandrarasmi yin la / sku 'khrungs yul ni / lung po rtsi dkar bya ba yin / brgyud [43] pa ni glang dpal gyi seng ge'i brgyud / pha sman pa yang rgyal gyi bu la / bar ma chung ngu nas chos la mos shing / gcig phur 'gol ba'i sar byon nas / thugs dam la bzhugs pas / sku phra mo nas / mi kun gyis sgom chen sgom chen zhes zer / rje btsun grags pa rin po che las sogs pa'i / bla ma mang po'i zhabs la gtug nas phyi nang gsang gsum gyi chos la mkhas pa / bsgrubs pa la brtson pa / 'chad pa la mnga' bmyes shing / rtogs pa mchog tu gyur pa / snyigs ma'i dus kyi sems can thams cad kyi 'dren pa dam pa de nyid / rkang smad rgyal 'dzin phu'i phyogs su / yongs kyi bla ma dge ba'i bshes gnyen mang po dang / yon bdag rnams kyis gdan drongs pas / bdag dang mjal bas / thugs rje 'dzin po mdzad / chos gang la gang dgos gnan / rje btsun chen po de'i rnam thar phu ti chen po gcig yod / mdzad chos la'ang rab dbye rgya mtsho la sogs pa'i bstan bcos bsam gyis mi khyab pa mang po yod / 'de nyid ni rgya gar gyi gter ston vajramati / dgongs 'dus la sogs lung bstan mang po nas [44] zin pa yin / o rgyan rin po che padmas byin gyis

brlabs pa'i skyes bu dam pa chen po yin cing / gang zag spyi btsun pa ni ma yin pa mtshungs med chos kyi rje suryacandra de nyid kyi slob ma ni / rgya btsun pa nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho nyid yin pas / rus ni rgya ra ba / pha ni tshem yul nam mkha' / ma ni bde ba'i padma zhes bya ba de nyid kyi sras su lcags pho khyi lo la 'khrungs / lo lnga lon nas pha ma 'chi bas / a khu bla ma chos grub pa'i drung nas bskyang la lo drug nas yi ge kun klog thub par byung bas / bcu gnyis steng nas drung chos rdor rtogs ldan mdun nas dge bsnyen zhus / khu bo bla ma'i drung nas mun sel sgron me dang rdzogs chen gsang bskor sogs chos 'ga' zhig zhus / bcu gsum nas dam pa mnga' ris sa'i drung nas dge tshul zhus / bcu drug nas rnam rgya bzang po'i drung nas rdzogs chen chos skor zab khyad can rnams zhus / bco brgyad la nam mkha' bshes gnyen drung nas dus 'khor dgongs 'dus kun rig sogs kyi gtsos pa'i yon tan gyi mtha' thams cad bcad / nyer gcig la khu bo bla ma'i gdan sa sman [45] mo dgon gyi khri mnan nas / chos dang 'jig rten la mnga' brnyes pa / 'gro ba yongs kyi dpal mgon du gyur pas yar dkon mchog la mchod pa dang / dge 'dun la zhabs tog bgyis pa / mar 'gro ba la phan thog dpag med mdzad pa / 'dzam gling kun gyi dad pa'i rten che bar byung / de nas lha sar jo mjal dang rtswa ri tra sogs bskor ba dang / chos rje rin po che gtsang chen pa'i drung nas rab byung bsnyen rdzogs zhus / ming nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho btags / gzhan yang bla ma dam pa 'ga' zhig la chos lugs kun gyi dbang lung khrid gsum dpag med zhus nas / bla ma rin po che bsod nams rgyal mtshan sman mor gdan drangs / zab chos tha dag gi chos 'khor bskor / de nas bla ma dam pa mtshungs med suryacandra dang mjal ba'i drung nas gsang sngags rgyud 'bum dang / bka' gsar rnying gi dbang lung dpag med dang / khyad par du lhag pa'i zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi chos skor mtha' dag dbang lung khrid dang ngo sprod lag len yang dag par zhus / lung bstan nas byung ba ltar chos 'di'i bdag po khyed yin pas bstan pa skyong dgos gsungs pa'i [46] bka' rgya gnang bzhin / skal ldan las can rnams la rim bzhin bla mas gsungs pa ltar spel nas / zab chos dgongs pa rang grol gyi bstan pa nyi ma shar ba bzhin byas nas 'gro rnams smin grol gyi lam la 'god nus par mdzad nas / 'gro ba mtho

dman med par bu bzhin 'tshos nas 'gro don je cher byung ngo / gzhan yang rje karma pa / 'brug pa rgyal dbang chos rje / sa skya pa dpal ldan bzang po / bsod nams rgya mtsho / 'bri gung sku mched / gter ston chen po ratna gling pa / khro phu lo tsā ba la sogs pa'i byang sems grub thob rig 'dzin brgyud pa'i bla ma bod gangs can gyi chos kyi srog shing mdzad pa'i rje btsun dam pa mkhas grub bcu phrag lnga tsam gyi drung nas / bka' gsar rnying rgyud sde phyi nang bstan bcos man ngag dpag tu med pa bsam las 'das pa'i dbang khrid lung gsum bum pa gang byo'i tshul du gnang ba snying rus dam por bgyis nas spyi bor lan cing snying du bcang nas bsnyen bsgrub bskyed rdzogs zab mo la lam 'byongs pa dben gnas ri khrod sogs la yun ring po bzhugs pa dang / slob dpon rin po che'i lung bstan nas yod pa dang / bla ma gong mas kyang lung bstan mang du [47] byung ba dang / rang gi yab myes bla ma brgyud pa bzang ba dang / bdag brtson 'grus zab mo'i thugs rje la brten nas / chos 'khor rtse sogs dgon sde drug bdun tsam btab nas 'gro don gegs med du byung zhing / rang cag sgo gsum gnad lam gcig tu phabs pa'i 'bras bus / srid zhi kun gyi dad pa'i rten / tshogs bsag pa'i zhing / phyi ma'i blo gtad / da lta'i gegs sel dpag med byung las grub pa / bar chad bdud sde'i dpung tshogs mthar byed pa / zab chos zhi khro bka' bab pa'i rnal 'byor pa rgya ra ba nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho nas rim par spel nas brgyud pa'o / 'di nas rang lugs so so'i rtsa ba'i bla ma'i bar brgyud pa zam ma chad par rtsal ba gal che ba'o / gzhan yang brgyud 'dzin gyi skyes bu dam pa rnams la gdams pa ni /

> mi chos kyi rtsa ba yin pas kun dang mthun par gyis /
> lha chos kyi rtsa ba yin pas gzhan phan gang che gyis /
> mi rtag pa'i rtsa ba yin pas nam 'chi nges med som /
> rgyu 'bras kyi rtsa ba yin pas 'khor ba'i sdug bsngal som /
> bdun ma'i rtsa ba yin pas blo phug chos la gtod /
> chos kyi rtsa ba yin pas sems kyis [48] sems la ltos /
> nyams len kyi rtsa ba yin pas dran pa yengs med brten /

gdams ngag gi rtsa ba yin pas yengs med kyi ngang la zhog /

spyod pa'i rtsa ba yin pas spang blangs med par gyis /

'bras bu'i rtsa ba yin pas re dogs med par gyis /

grogs kyi rtsa ba yin pas dag snang kun la gyis /

bsrung bsdom gyi rtsa ba yin pas rang sems dbang du tshugs /

skyabs 'gro'i rtsa ba yin pas dad pa brtan po gyis /

sems bskyed kyi rtsa ba yin pas rang las bzhan gces gyis /

dam tshig gi rtsa ba yin no ngos lkog med par gyis /

'gro kun pha ma yin pas drin lan kun la 'jol /

dus ngan gyi snyigs mar 'dug go brtson 'grus chos la gyis /

de ltar mdo don chos la dril la ri khrod dben gnas brten zhing / bla ma'i gdams ngag sems la bzhag cing nyams su len pa la brtson par mdzad nas 'chi khar mi 'tsher ba tsam re mdzad cig / phyi rabs seng phug kun gyi thugs la zhog dang snying gtam yin / nga rgas pos kha chems bzhag kyang de las med / yid la zungs shig / bla ma dam pas bdag la 'di skad gsungs / zab chos 'di lan [48b] mang thos pa'i sems can thams cad ngan song tu 'gro mi srid gsungs pas shin tu zab bo / samayā / de ltar brgyud pa'i rim pa zur tsam 'di / mdo khams kyi bshes gnyen dam pa bla ma chos rgyal gyis yang yang bskul nas / rang 'dra blo dman rnams yid ches pa'i phyir / sa lug lo zla ba bdun pa'i yar tshes bcu la / gdam myong rgya grong gi g.yas zur gangs phu'i 'dab / chu bo gser ldan lo hi ta'i g.yas phyogs / dpal rin chen gling du rgya btsun nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bkod pa / yi ge pa ni lho rgyud kyi ban chung bsod nams rgya mtsho bris pa'o / dge ba yis mtshon nas sems can thams cad 'khor ba dang ngan song gi sdug bsngal gyi rgya mtsho chen po la myur du grol nas / rnam mkhyen rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thob pa'i rgyu ru smon / sarvamangala //

Translation

A Garland of Jewels
An Abridged History of the Transmission Lineage of the
Profound Doctrine of The Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities[1]

[28] Homage to the three divine peaceful and wrathful exalted bodies. With respect to the set of teachings of the *Liberation upon Hearing in the Bardo* from the *Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*, its transmission lineage [is presented here] in order to instill trust in those who have faith [in these teachings]. It is said, "Like reaching the [mountain] snow [which is] the source of rivers, [this teaching] comes down to me [from] All Good [Samantabhadra]."[2] There are three [types of] transmission: (1) the Wisdom-Mind Transmission of the Victorious Ones, (2) the Symbolic Transmission for the Awareness-Holders, and (3) the Authentic Oral Transmission for Ordinary Beings.

1. THE WISDOM-MIND TRANSMISSION

The Wisdom-Mind Transmission is taken to be trustworthy and reliable. According to the *Union of Sun and Moon [Tantra]*:[3]

If there is no explanation of the history,

Of these exalted Words, which are definitely a great secret,

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[1] I wish to thank Khenpo Nyima Dondrup (henceforth ND) for his kind assistance in the preliminary preparation of this translation.

[2] The verb used is *bshad*, "to explain", but I think here it means "passed down, communicated" in accordance with the analogy of snow melting into the rivers that flow from the mountains.

[3] *Nyi-ma dang zla-ba kha-sbyor-ba chen-po gsang-ba'i rgyud*. In NGB (Mtshams-brag), vol.12, fols. 491-559; NGB (Gting-skyes), vol.9, fols. 386-435. Chapters three and four have been translated in Orofino 1990, pp. 31-59.

Then unfortunately there would be no trust [in the authenticity of this teaching].[4]

The Wisdom-Mind Transmission lineage of the Victorious Ones is three-fold: Dharmakāya Samantabhadra in union with his consort, Vajradhāra, the sixth [lineage-teacher], and Vajrasattva, the Teacher.

[29] In the palace of the Reality-sphere of Akaniṣṭa, the naturally pure space, Dharmakāya Samantabhadra sits in union with his consort, unconditioned, spontaneously present from the beginning. The Transcendant Lord is the Glorious Samantabhadra in union with his consort sitting in equipoise as appearance and emptiness, method and insight. In other words, the stainless Dharmakāya without any nature whatsoever rises up in the appearance of a subduer, in the aspect of benevolent [body with] face and arms, ablaze with the major and minor marks. From within the dimension which is devoid of all attributes of [conceptual] elaboration, this pristine wisdom of the Reality-sphere of Akaniṣṭa resides in a palace that pulsates with the five lights. The thoroughly perfected Wisdom-Mind of the Transcendant Lord, the Glorious Samantabhadra, is entrusted to Vajradhāra, the sixth [lineage-teacher], and then he is blessed as the Great Powerful One. After being blessed in that way, with compassion he spontaneously appeared before his disciples and, in their field of perception, he displayed the immeasurable major and minor marks [of a Buddha]. From among the many imaginary activities [of Samantabhadra-Vajradhāra, this] account is only a summation. [30] In gratitude, by skillful means the Transcendant sixth [lineage-teacher] is Vajradhāra himself. The Transcendant sixth [lineage-teacher] himself entrusted his Wisdom-Mind to the Teacher Vajrasattva and then blessed him.

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[4]The tantra reads: *lo rgyus don gyis ma bshad na / gsang chen nges pa'i bka' 'di la / yid mi ches pa'i skyon du 'gyur.* Translated in Patrul Rinpoche 1994, p. 346: "If you do not explain the history of its origins/People will commit the fault of not believing/In the profoundly secret true teaching".

From within the great sphere free from [all conceptual] elaboration, the Transcendant Teacher Vajrasattva's mind, self-emergent pristine wisdom, is activated in appearance [only],[5] and thus spontaneously appears [in the form of] the exalted Body of Complete Enjoyment. [Within] the emanation and absorption of light rays, this great [self-emergent] pristine wisdom abides spontaneously as the exalted Body of the Thirty-Six Activities[6] From within a luminous bindu [this pristine wisdom] is present in sixty perfect locations. Immeasurable exalted Buddha Bodies manifest in mandalas which [can be seen] by [Vajrasattva's] eyes,[7] and then the light rays which are the very nature of those [exalted Bodies] form into the Buddhas of the Five Families and manifest before his awareness. At that very moment, from Vajrasattva's luminous tongue, [which only seems] to appear, the sound of self-emergent [mantric] letters flow spontaneously, [repeating] three times: "Every sentient being is established in the unsurpassable state of enlightenment." From within the Mind of [Vajrasattva] Reality appears spontaneously as Samantabhadra to the self-emergent pristine wisdom, and having done so, his self-emergent inexhaustible compassion emanates in the ten directions. From within that dimension, the exalted Body of the Transcendant Vajrasattva [31] forms into the complete enjoyment of countless retinues, and from them the exalted Body of Great Perfection brilliantly radiates. In the same manner, the Buddhas of the Five Families and so forth, along with each of their innumerable mandalas, form into the complete enjoyment of Vajrasattva himself, and the exalted Body of Great Perfection radiates as light—this occurs twelve times. By doing so, all phenomena are pleasured (*long-spyod*) and perfected, and thus, at that moment all phenomena are devoid of objectification and consolidation.[8] Then, Vajrasattva's Wisdom-

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[5] *rnam pa g.yos pa*. This means that Vajrasattva's mind only appears to move (ND).

[6] *ye shes chen po 'di 'od zer gyi 'phro 'dus / mdzad pa sum cu so drug gi sku rang byung du gnas pa 'od kyi thig le las*. This means that the body emanates and absorbs light rays thirty-six times (ND).

[7] In other words, these mandalas manifest in the process of the bifurcation of subject and object (ND).

[8] *chos thams cad la longs spyod cing rdzogs pas 'di tshe chos thams cad kyi dmigs bsdus dang bral ba nyid do*. In other words, everything is free of conceptual elaboration (ND).

Mind self-appears to the many objects of his compassion.[9] At that time, the King of [Self-]Cognizance called Vajrasattva the Teacher, dwelling in beautifully arrayed light, in a multi-storied mansion[10] emerges as sovereign of the mandala. From within the state of teaching in which Vajrasattva's exalted Body, Speech and Mind arise spontaneously,[11] he emerges as the Great Unshakeable One himself.[12] Furthermore, being immutable the indescribable Buddhas are naturally present in their own clarity, perfectly self-emergent pristine wisdom—[they come] from every blissful Pure Land, even [Akṣobhya's realm of] Pure Joy. The Transcendant Vajrasattva himself gave the blessings of his Wisdom-Mind to the Great Awareness-Holder Dga'-rab-rdo-rje.[13]

2. THE SYMBOLIC TRANSMISSION

Dga'-rab-rdo-rje

[32] The awareness lineage of Awareness-Holders is to be established [in the following way]. In accordance with the blessings of the Teacher Vajrasattva, 360 years after the Buddha had passed beyond suffering in Dhanakośa, west of the Diamond Seat[14] at the temple of Glorious Enchanting Mound [Saṅkarakūṭa], king Uparaja—possessed of an array of perfections—and his queen Akokabhāsvatī [Snang-ba-gsal-ba'i-'od] had a daughter named Sudharmā,[15] who had been ordained [a nun]. This nun did religious practice on an island in the western district. After having put up a grass hut, she and her servant—a Ḍākinī—were filled with joy and abided simultaneously in the doctrine. One

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[9]That is, the Buddhas of the Five Families.
[10]Kuṭagāra?
[11]An awkward rendering of *ston pa'i ngang nas*.
[12]*mi g.yo ba rab tu gnas*. This is also the proper title of an eighth level bodhisattva.
[13]On whom, see GKCB, pp. 111-117; Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, pp. 490-494; Reynolds 1996, *passim*, esp. pp. 177-189.
[14]This is modern-day Bodhgaya.
[15]Text read *suddhama*.

evening, Sudharmā dreamed that a white man came to her [holding] a crystal vase adorned with the seeds of the Five [Buddha] Families and placed it on top of her head. This dream made the princess physically ill. [After awhile] the right time had come and a she gave birth to a fatherless son from the right side of her rib cage. She lamented [in shock], "A bastard son like this has been born to a nun!" Her servant said, "This is the sacred son of a Buddha". Even though [Sudharmā had heard her servant speak] she [thought the child was] not right (*ma-nyan*) and so she made [her servant] throw the child down into an ash pit.[16] Many omens such as light, sound, rainbows and so forth occured indicating that a Buddha had arrived in the world. As a consequence of those signs, the nun said with concern: "If my son is an emanation of a Buddha, then he should still be alive [even though he was thrown into a pit of ashes]". After three days they went to see him. The child was sitting straight up in the ashes, resting in bliss[17] and smiling. [Sudharmā and her servant] picked [the boy] up, wrapped (*lcibs*) him in white silk, and ritually cleansed him with incense water. The gods of the atmosphere made purification offerings and lovingly took care of him. Auspicious words and so forth and many miraculous omens occurred. Since this little boy, who had been hidden from people (*yul-mi-rnam*) in the middle of the ashes, did not die there, he was called Ashen Zombie [Ro-langs-thal-mdog].

At seven, the little boy said, "I want to meet with all the paṇḍits of India and ask them questions about [some] disconcerting terms [of doctrine]. The men replied, "You have [just] turned seven years old. You haven't even lost your first tooth."[18] But then he said, "I must speak about [these] religious matters."[19] Later, he met with his grandfather

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[16] *thal dong du dor du bcug* (33).
[17] I have taken *me le* to be *me re kyi le*, "bliss".
[18] *so gcig yang ma brjes pas*; read *kyang* for *yang* (33).
[19] The episode is described in Dudjom Rinpoche 1991, p. 492:

Uparāja and five hundred paṇḍits. [34] Ashen Zombie asked them questions, but none of the paṇḍits could answer. They asked him questions in return, and he answered every one without hesitating. Following that, faith was instilled in all the paṇḍits. The king touched the boy's feet with his head [as a sign of great respect] and said, "Now, you are an extremely delightful boy." For this reason he was called Delightful Vajra [Dga'-rab-rdo-rje]. All the paṇḍits gave him the name Prajñābhava. Afterwards, he sat absorbed in meditative concentration for thirty-two years on a northern mountain called Completely Luminous Sun [Nyi-ma-rab-tu-snang-byed, Sūryaprakāśa] where there were a large number of non-human spirits.

[One day] the earth trembled and sounds and lights [appeared along with] a shower of flowers and [a voice was heard], "You have threatened the [Hindu] extremist teachings!"[20] An extremist king said, "Because the development and propogation of Buddhism means the downfall of [Hindu] extremist teachings you [Dga'-rab-rdo-rje] must be killed!" But nothing whatsoever could be found that would kill him.[21] Then the master Dga'-rab-rdo-rje flew up to the sky. The [Hindu] extremist king and his retinue were spellbound.[22] After they had paid homage to him, [Dga'-rab-rdo-rje] initiated them into the Buddhist teaching.

"When seven years had passed the boy said to his mother, 'Mother, I would like to converse with scholars on the doctrine. Please give me your consent.' To which she replied, 'Dear child, you are still quite young. As the scholars are wise and learned men, it will be hard for you to succeed.' But, on his persistent request, she told him to discuss the doctrine with five hundred scholars, who were the priests of the aforementioned king Uparāja. The boy then went to Dhanakośa and sought an audience with the king, to whom he repeated his request. But the king thought, 'The lad is but a child, so it will be too difficult for him to discuss the doctrine with scholars. And yet, there are many marks of a great individual upon his body. Perhaps he is an emanation."

[20] *mu stegs pa*, "one who supports the extreme", i.e., tīrthika. These are the teachings of the Hindu extremists who believe in the permanence of all phenomena.

[21] Text corrected; read *gsod pa'i thabs ci byas kyang thabs ma rnyed.*

[22] A somewhat loose reading of the grammar. The instrumental creates an awkward structure in English.

Dga'-rab-rdo-rje had in his mind all of the religious teachings of the previous Buddhas, [35] especially the six million four hundred thousand verses of the self-emergent Great Perfection. On the summit of the precious Mount Malaya, where the teaching is protected and disseminated, the Bliss-Taste Ḍākinī, the Bliss-Giving Limitless Virtue Ḍākinī, and the master Dga'-rab-rdo-rje spent three years recording [the teachings] in writting and cataloguing them. Sealing and entrusting them to the Ḍākinīs, he placed them in a cave called Real Origin of the Ḍākinīs [Dhākki-mngon-byung]. [On another occassion,] the master Dga'-rab-rdo-rje rested in contemplation at the great charnel ground called Cool Grove [Bsil-ba'i-tshal, Sītavana] just over five leagues from the northeastern border of Vajrāsana. There he initiated the Ḍākinīs into the Buddhist teaching.

Srī Siṃha

At about the same time, in the Chinese city of Tree Root [Shing-rtsa'i-gling], the householder Dge-ba'i-blo-can and his wife Snang-gsal-ma had a son named Srī Siṃha, who possessed the virtues of ascetic practice. After some time, he thought about going to the city of Golden Isle [Suvarṇadvīpa] located in the west.[23] Having mounted a powerful black camel he went to the uncivilized borderlands.[24] While teaching in the center of that area, the exalted Lord Avalokiteśvara appeared in the sky above him and made this prophetic declaration: "O, fortunate child of the lineage! If you sincerely wish to realize the goal, go to the great charnel ground Cool Grove."

Through the power of ascetic training, swift-footedness,[25] and magic he went to the great charnel ground Cool Grove and met with the great teacher Dga'-rab-rdo-rje. He

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[23]*kha nub la gtad de*. In general the term *kha nub* means "night before last" and *gtad*, "entrust, fixate, lean on". I am only assuming based on other reliable histories that this comes to mean "siuated in the west".

[24]*mtha' 'khob*, "uncivilized" means a place where the Buddha's teaching is unavailable (ND).

[25]Text should read *rkang mgyogs* for *skang mgyogs*.

asked him, "Please give me the authentic instructions." After recognizing that he was a fortunate being with good karma, [Dga'-rab-rdo-rje] gave him all of the instructions on the essence of the precious esoteric precepts, and especially the meaning of every singal one of the six million four hundred thousand Great Perfection tantras, without exception. For twenty-five years, Srī Siṃha scrutinized these tantras thoroughly, and subsequently put them into practice. As a result, he came to possess the great confidence of realization. The great master Srī Siṃha remained in meditation in the Sosadvīpa [Sosa-gling] charnel ground.

Padmasambhava

At that time, Like-Me,[26] the Lotus-born Learned Master of O-rgyan [Uḍḍiyāna] received the "full genuine vase"[27] of the entire practice-cycle of the luminous Seminal Heart, *The Correct Color of Gold.* [37] This is an Unexcelled Ati[-yoga cycle] which condenses into a refined essence the entire practice series of secret mantra, along with the initiations that ripen and liberate, and especially the pure complete set of Great Perfection teachings. Abiding in the manner of one who is uncontaminated, in the middle of the charnel ground Sosadvīpa [Srī Siṃha] constructed (*byas-pa*) out of precious gold and silver, an enormous and very tall self-emergent stupa with a wheel and a parasol. In front of the stupa's immeasurable emanating light rays, in the presence of the compassionate wise and skillful master Srī Siṃha, the three spiritual friends—Paṇḍit Vimalamitra, King Jñānasūtra, possessor of ascetic virtues, and Like-Me Padma of O-rgyan—had a revelation of all the key points and received the blessings [of Srī Siṃha]. This history of the Symbolic Transmission of the Awareness-Holders is established with certainty.

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[26]*bdag 'dra*, 36. According to legend, when Padmasambhava first saw the statue made in his likeness at Bsam-yas monastery he remarked, "It looks like me!".

[27]*bum pa mtshan ldan du byos*. This is an idiomatic expression meaning that Padmasambhava's mind (the vase) has been filled up with the teachings. In this case, the vase also has no leaks; it is uncomtaminated (*ma zag pa*) (ND).

3. THE AUTHENTIC ORAL TRANSMISSION

The religious king Khri-srong-lde'u-btsan, his son, the translator Cog-ro Klu'i-rgyal-mtshan and so forth, offered a gold and turquoise mandala to Padmasambhava, the great precious [master] of O-rgyan, and asked him:

> "O, Great Master! You always have time to be compassionately benevolent. [38] In former times you condensed all the inner and outer vehicle teachings into one single key point. Now, will you please give us a teaching on how to attain Buddhahood in one single lifetime; a teaching whose meaning has been concentrated into a profound but small doctrine which liberates merely by being heard, [that is] without having to rely on the hardships of effort and striving for long periods of time?"

Since they had been moved to tears[28] by their intense devotion and because he had been asked [the question], the Precious Master rested for a moment in his realization and then said:

> "O, noble king, your son and ministers, as you wish I will condense into a single [teaching] the key points of the six million four hundred thousand tantras of the Great Perfection, which is the very manifestation of Glorious Samantabhadra's Wisdom-Mind. By simply being heard, this teaching will close the gates to rebirth in the lower realms; by simply understanding it, one will depart to the realm of Great Bliss; by pondering its meaning, one will depart to the place of non-returning. This will be very meaningful to whoever has a [karmic] connection to it. Even though I do have such a teaching, there will be those who are unable to grasp it, like the unfortunate narrow-minded lower

[28] *mchi ma krug*. An alternate spelling of *mchi ma 'khrugs*.

vehicle followers who have doubts and hold mistaken views. Consequently, they will slander the teaching over and over again. For this reason you cannot broadcast it anywhere else, [39] not even to the wind.[29] I have concealed [the teaching] as a treasure for the benefit of future generations living in a degenerate age."

Padmasambhava condensed all the teachings into an abridged form (*mdo-'gag*) and gave it the title *The Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*.[30] He intended it [to be used] for the future benefit of those who had little merit living in a degenerate age. In Dwags-po he concealed the teaching as a treasure on Sgam-po mountain in a location which resembles a dancing servant deity. He offered the following prayer to the fortunate one who is [karmically] connected to it:

"In the *Self Liberation of Great Bliss* [which is included] in this [treasure teaching] it is said:

Alas! [The *Self-Liberated Wisdom*] is the pinnacle of all the teachings,

It is the supreme essence of all unexcelled secrets,

The method that liberates into great bliss those who suffer,

It is the spontaneous attainment of manifest Buddhahood right now,

It is the meaningful essence of the Wisdom Mind of the Victorious Ones of the three times,

This condensed elixir is like the refined essence of butter.

It was concealed by Like-Me Padmasambhava of O-rgyan,

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[29]*rlung phyogs tsam*. An idiomatic expression meaning that this doctrine is so secret even the wind is a dangerous "person" to tell since it can take the message everywhere it goes (ND).

[30]In Tibet, the titles of such works are considered extremely profound and powerful. There are three levels at which scriptures can be understood: (1) the superior individual can grasp the essential meaning of a teaching simply by seeing its title; (2) the average one can distinguish what subject is taught (sutra or tantra, *zhi-khro*, etc) by analyzing the title; (3) the inferior one can identify and locate the teaching by knowing its title (like finding a book in the library). (ND).

As a precious treasure to be arranged but not disseminated for the benefit of future generations.

At the end of the period when the lifespan is [only] fifty, [40]

All those who do not possess instructional teachings like this,

Will without doubt go to the lower realms.

For the benefit of sentient beings living in degenerate times,

I put [these teachings] in writing and concealed them on Sgam-po mountain.

At some point during the degenerate age, my supreme and worthy heart-son will come.

His father will be a siddha named Nyi zla.

He, who will be called Karma-gling-pa, will have spiritual courage.

As a sign of his revelatory pristine wisdom, his right thigh will be marked with a mole.

[He will be born] in a dragon or snake year into the hero lineage possessed of good karma.

May this teaching meet with this fortunate being."

Karma-gling-pa

Just as the prayer had said, Karma-gling-pa was born in the upper city of Dwags-po as the eldest son of Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas. After the prophecy and auspicious connections converged, he extracted secretly in Dwags-po from Sgam-po-gdar mountain—resembling a dancing servant deity—the treasure cycle of the *Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*. In addition, he also drew out from this treasure site the *Peaceful and Wrathful Deities of the Lotus* and so forth. It so happened that there was gossip [about Karma-gling-pa] because the auspicious connection [between he] and his consort forecast in the treasure prophecy was broken. At any rate, he still had

a son. It is also rumored that he showed one of the yellow scrolls [to someone] before the time had come for the ***Self-Liberated Wisdom*** to be disseminated. [41] Consequently, his lifespan was interrupted. Endowed with immeasurable compassionate and enlightened qualities, his activities totally unhindered, Karma-gling-pa was aware of his own impending [death] and made many clairvoyant statements such as, "In about a year from now many designs of lotus blossoms will appear on my body." One year later, on the verge of dying, he presented his son with the initiations and readings of the ***Self-Liberated Wisdom*** and told him, "Do not show these teachings to anyone else [but later] give them to a certain holy man named Nyi zla [Sūryacandra], and in doing so, these practices will benefit all beings extensively." After giving many [more] prophecies he passed away. Karma-gling-pa's father was the siddha Nyi-zla-sangs-rgyas, who lived to be one hundred and twenty years old.

Nyi-zla-chos-rje

Karma-gling-pa's son was Nyi-zla-chos-rje, who from early on, had faith in the religious teachings and was very intelligent. He was well-liked by all, loving, compassionate, and had an aspiration for enlightenment. He had perfected all of the special sciences,[31] and had especially become an expert on the religious meaning of the natural Great Perfection. At ten years old he began to teach the doctrine [42] and was skilled in bestowing initiations and so forth. He was an inspiration to his students and his activities came to benefit all beings extensively.

From Dwags-po, Nyi-zla-chos-rje travelled to the district of Long-po and met with the precious Lama Sūryacandraraśmi [Nyi-zla-'od-zer]. Since his dreams and the auspicious connections were in proper accord, he presented the lama Nyi-zla-'od-zer with

[31]There are five sciences: spiritual philosophy (*nang-gi rig-pa*); dialectics and logic (*gtan-tshigs-kyi rig-pa*); grammar (*sgra'i rig-pa*); medicine (*gso-ba'i rig-pa*); arts and crafts (*bzo-gnas-kyi rig-pa*).

the cycle of *The Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities* and said:

> "You have been prophecized as the third lineage holder [of Karma-gling-pa's treasure]. I have never shown this teaching [to anyone else] not even to the wind. It is stated:
>
> > *For up to three generations it is crucial that [the treasure doctrines] be transmitted to only a single person. After the third generation immeasurable benefits will arise for all living beings.*
>
> Do not show [these teachings to anyone] for at least six years. Practice them and then after six years show them to others. Great benefit will come to all living beings.
>
> > *Karma-gling-pa's beneficial [treasure] will spread throughout the northern region.*
>
> This statement was a prophecy that the teaching would come to spread and flourish in the northern regions . Do not teach for at least ten years the cycle of *The Great Bliss of the Lower Gateway* included in this profound doctrine. After that time, your teaching will be free from obstacles."[32]

<u>Sūryacandrarasmi [Nyi-zla-'od-zer]</u>

[Nyi-zla-chos-rje's] student was Sūryacandrarasmi, who was born in Long-po Rtsi-dkar into the lineage of Rlang Dpal-gyi-seng-ge, as the son of a doctor named Yang-rgyal. From early on he was interested in religion, and so he ran away to practice

[32]What sort of obstacles are referred to here? Restrictions of transmission, obstacles to enlightenment, or difficulties brought about by the doctrine being taught in an unauthorized manner?

meditation in solitude. Consequently, from the time he was very young everyone said that he was an extremely advanced meditator. Having touched the feet of many lamas, such as the precious Rje-btsun-grags-pa and so forth, he became an expert in the outer, inner, and secret doctrines. He persevered in practice, was a master exegete, and had become supremely realized. This sacred teacher helped guide all sentient beings living in the degenerate age. All the lamas, spiritual friends, and benefactors invited him to come before the son of Rkang-smad-rgyal-mtshan[33] and so that's how I met him. Treating me with compassion, he gave me whatever teachings I required.

There exists a great biographical work on the life of this venerable one. He himself composed many inconceivable treatises and so forth on a host of topics concerning religious practice. In particular, he had already been prophecied many times in the prophecies of the Indian treasure revealer Vajramati,[34] of *The [Scripture of the] Embodiment of the Realization [of All Buddhas]*,[35] and so forth. According to these prophecies, [Sūryacandra] was a great holy person who had been blessed by Padmasambhava, the great precious one from O-rgyan, and he was not strictly an ordinary individual.

Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho

Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho was a student of the incomparable dharma lord Sūryacandraraśmi. He was born in the iron-male-dog year [1430] into the Rgya-ra-ba family. His father was named Nam-mkha' of Tshem-yul and his mother, Bde-ba'i padma. When he was five years old his parents died and so he was taken care of by his paternal

[33]Text corrected; read *rgyal mtshan* for *rgyal 'dzin* (43).
[34]The sentence should be read to mean that Nyi-zla-'od-zer was the incarnation of Vajramati (ND). But, the grammar does not support this reading. Moreover, this is clearly not the interpretation in GKCB, p. 459.
[35]*Sangs-rgyas thams-cad-kyi dgongs-pa 'dus-pa'i mdo*. A major Anu-yoga scripture.

uncle Bla-ma-chos-grub. At six, he knew [how to] read and write. When he was twelve he asked to become a lay devotee (*upāsaka*) in the presence of Drung-chos Rdo-rje-rtogs-ldan and requested from Khu-bo-bla-ma teachings on *The Lamp that Dispels the Darkness*,[36] the cycle of the secret Great Perfection, and so forth. At thirteen he asked to become a novitiate (*śramaṇera*) in the presence of Dam-pa Mga'-ris-sa. When he was sixteen he requested teachings on the profound cycle of Great Perfection doctrines from Rnam-rgyal-bzang-po. At eighteen in the presence of Nam-mkha'-bshes-gnyen he distinguished all the qualities of the principal teachings of the *Kālacakra*, the *Embodiment of Realization*, the *All-Knowing*, and so forth. When he was twenty-one, he took hold of the throne of [45] Sman-mo monastery, the seat of Khu-bo-bla-ma, and afterwards attained mastery over all religious and secular matters. Because he had become a glorious protector of all living beings, he made offerings to the [Three] Precious Jewels and cared for all the monks, as well as being of immeasurable benefit to those beings lower than him. He emerged as a great model of faith for all the world.

Later on, in Lhasa he viewed [a statue of] the Buddha and circumambulated Mount Kailash. In the presence of Chos-rje-rin-po-che Gtsang-chen-pa, he requested to be fully ordained as a monk, and was then given the name Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho. Furthermore, he also asked several eminent teachers for the immeasurable initiations, readings, and guiding instructions for all the religious systems. After that he invited Bla-ma-rin-po-che Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan to Sman-mo. This teacher turned the wheel of all the profound doctrines.

After that he met with the incomparable lama Sūryacandra and requested teachings on the *One Hundred Thousand Tantras of Secret Mantra* [=*Rnying-ma'i rgyud-'bum*], the countless initiations and readings of the old and new oral precepts, and especially the

[36] *mun-sel sgron-me*.

initiations, readings and guiding instructions for the extensive doctrinal cycle of the *Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*. He also requested the direct introduction to this teaching and the complete instructions for its practice. Sūryacandra admonished him to spread the teaching to those fortunate ones who are fit for the bestowal of the authorized transmission with these words: "According to the prophecy, you are a master of this divine doctrine and thus you must uphold the teachings." [46] By following this lama's advice, the teaching of the *Profound Doctrine of the Self-Liberated Wisdom* glowed as bright as the sun, and thus he was able to set all beings on the path which ripens and liberates. Through his support of people as though they were his own sons, without [discriminating between] superior and inferior, [his teachings] came to be of great benefit to all living beings.

Moreover, in the presence of about fifty learned and venerable holy men—each [preserving] a life-tree[37] of the teachings of the Tibetan lamas who are included in the transmission lineage of Awareness-Holders; [in other words] those who have attained enlightenment such as Rje Karma-pa, 'Brug-pa Rgyal-dbang-chos-rje, Sa-skya-pa Dpal-ldan-bzang-po, Bsod-nams-rgya-mtsho, 'Bri-gung-pa Sku-mched, the treasure revealer Ratna-gling-pa,[38] Khro-phu lo-tsā-ba, and so forth[39]—he received the initiations, readings and guiding instructions for such an inconceivable number of treatises and instructional teachings on the old and new oral [precept] tantras that [it was like] filling a vase to the brim. Having strengthened [his grasp] of the essence, he held it above his head and to his heart. Afterwards, he sat [in meditation] for a long time in a solitary mountain hermitage and subsequently mastered the paths of the profound [stages of] approach and

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[37]*srog shing*, 46. Chandra Das, p. 1296: "The later Indian Buddhist used to preserve a particular tree believing that the duration of his life depended on its existence."
[38]Ratna-gling-pa (1403-1478) given as Padma-gling-pa (1450-1521) in GKCB, p.460.
[39]For speculation on the possible identities of these teachers, see Chapter 3.

accomplishment,[40] and of generation and completion. He was included in the prophecies of the Precious Master [Padmasambhava] and was even mentioned in many prophecies given by former lamas. [47] The teaching lineage of his own predecessors was excellent.

In dependence upon the compassionate concern of his profound diligence, he consecrated as many as six or seven monasteries, such as Chos-'khor-rtse and so forth, and having done so all living beings were benefitted without obstruction. Through the fruition of practice, in which the fundamentals of the three doors are brought down to one single path, and from removing obstacles right now, he established a support for faith in all [levels of] existence and peace [=samsara and nirvana], and confidence in accumulating merit in the next life. He destroyed the forces of a host of obstructing demons.

CONCLUSION

From Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, the yogi who had received the authentic transmission of the *Profound Doctrine of the Peaceful and Wrathful Deities*, the teaching was gradually disseminated. As a result, a transmission lineage [was inaugurated]. From Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho down through the root lamas of each of the individual traditions, it was important that the creative dynamism of this lineage continue without interruption. Furthermore, this was his practical advice to those sacred holders of the lineage:

> Since harmony is the root of worldly affairs, be in harmony with all things,
>
> Because helping others is the root of religious affairs, it is very important to be of benefit to others,

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[40]The two main stages in sādhana practice.

The uncertainty of death is the root of impermanence, so reflect on the uncertainty of the time of death,

Since suffering is the root of cause and effect, reflect on the suffering of cyclic existence,

Because aspiration is the root of future goals, focus your aspirations on religion,

Reflection is the root of Buddhist doctrine, so pay attention to your mind,

Since mindfulness is the root of [meditative] practice, reinforce your mindfulness without distraction,

One-pointed focus is the root of oral instruction, so remain in an undistracted state,

Since even-handedness is the root of conduct, do not adopt or reject [anything],

Since the lack of expectation is the root of fruition, do not anxiously anticipate [anything],

A pure outlook is the root of friendship, so perceive everything as pure,

Since self-control is the root of protecting your vows, control your own mind.

Because faith is the root of taking refuge, support your faith,

The altruistic attitude is the root of generating the mind [of enlightenment], so treat others as more important than yourself,

Because honesty is the root of the vows, act honestly without being two-faced,

Since graditude is the mother and father of all living beings, return everyone's kindness,

These are degenerate times, so practice these teachings diligently."

Now, in order to condense the teaching into its concise meaning, settle down at a solitary mountain hermitage, apply your mind to the oral instructions of your lamas, and diligently assimilate [their words] into your own experience. After doing all of this, at the very least

you can take comfort in the fact that you will not be distraught at the moment of dying. To all the young lions of future generations, keep this in your heart, it is my sincere advice. I, [Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho] the old man, made this dying testament.[41] It is nothing more than that. Keep it in mind. My sacred lama taught me these things. He said that it was impossible for any sentient being who hears this teaching [48b] many times to transmigrate to the lower realms. Therefore, the doctrine [of Karma-gling-pa] is very profound. Samayā.

Colophon

At the repeated urging of my spiritual friend, lama Chos-rgyal from Mdo-khams, and for the sake of [increasing] the faith in those inferior-minded like myself, I, Rgya-btsun Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, compiled this account of some of the stages in the transmission of this [treasure] in the earth-sheep year on the tenth day at the beginning of the seventh month at Dpal-rin-chen-gling, on the right side of the golden Lohita river at the bottom of the snowy foothills to the right of Gtam-myong[-myog] Rgya-grong. It was copied down by my scribe Bsod-nams-rgya-mtsho, the humble monk from Lho-rgyud. Having presented it with virtue, I pray that all sentient beings be quickly liberated from both samsara's and the lower realms' great oceans of suffering and obtain the expansive awakening of complete omniscience. Sarva mangalaṃ!

[41] *kha chems*. Generally a term used only in the context of someone's "dying will".

Appendix 2:
Genealogical Tables of the Transmission Lineages

Table 1. Kaḥ-thog Lineages

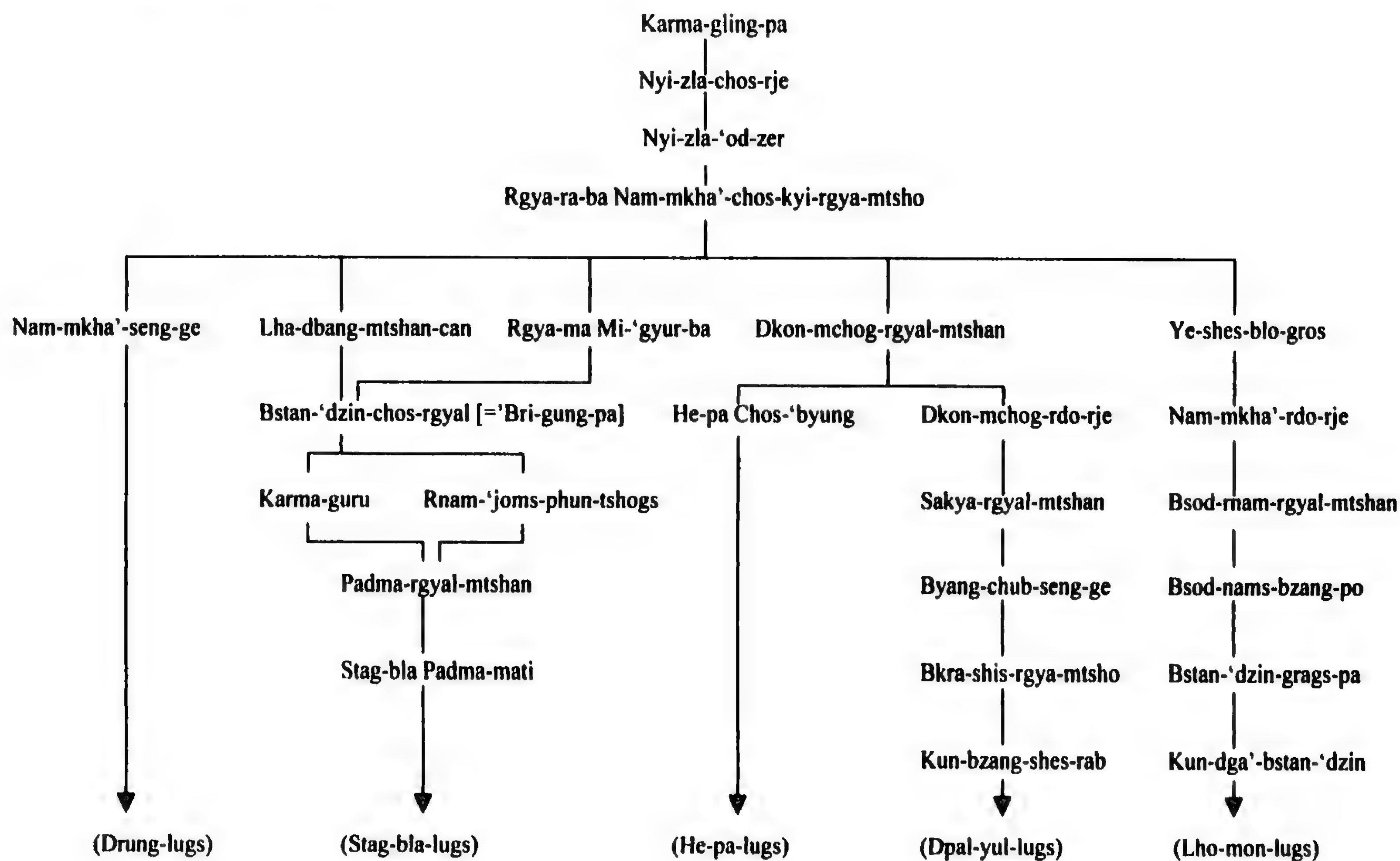


Table 2. Dpal-yul Lineage

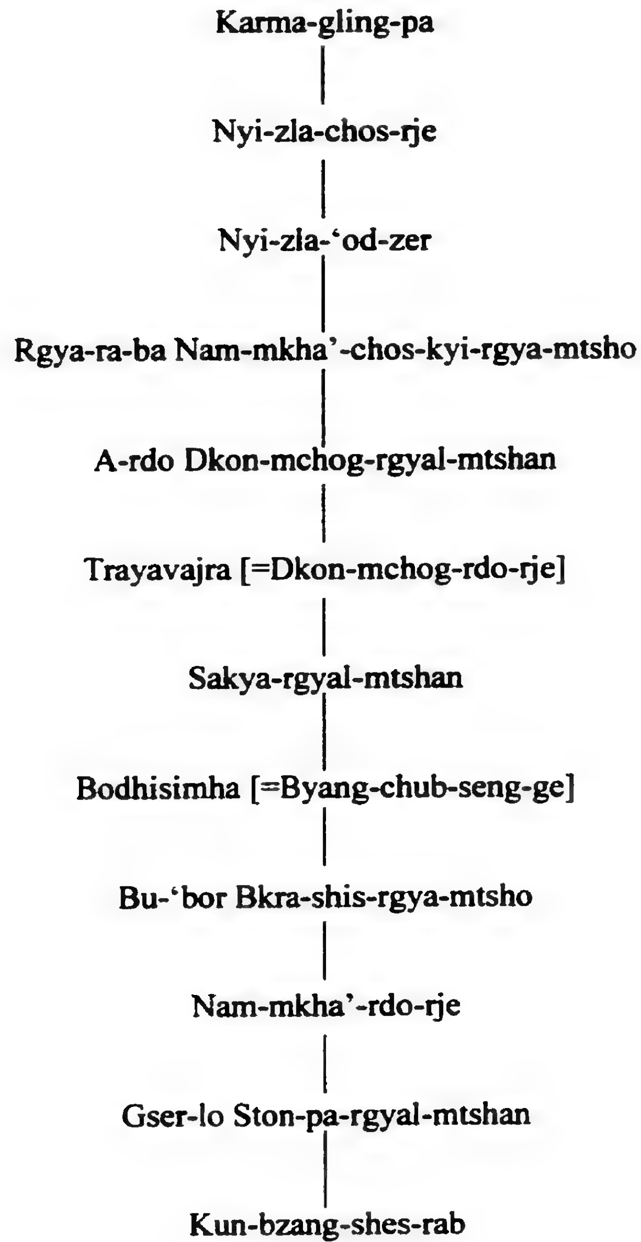


Table 3. Gnas-mdo Lineages

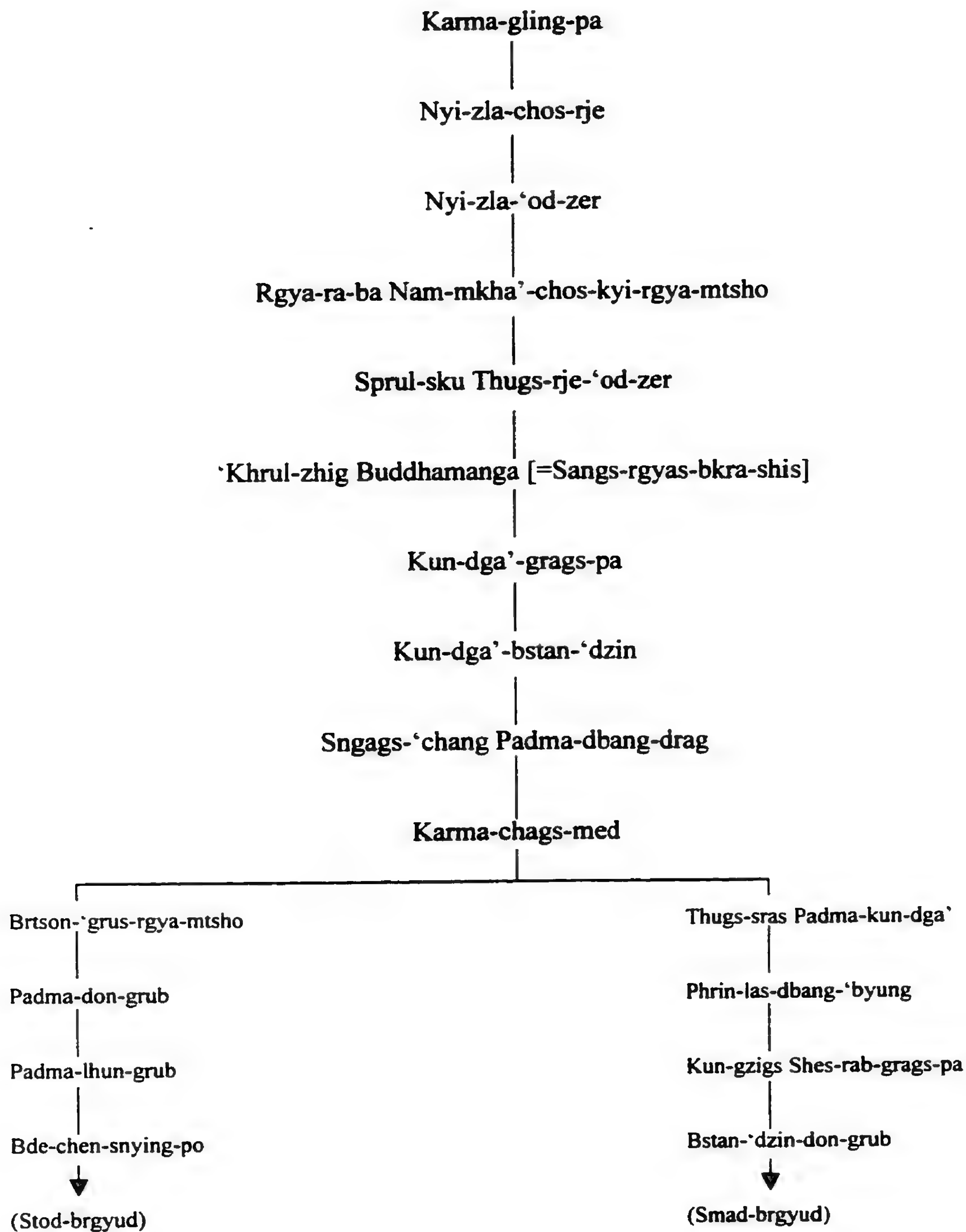


Table 4. Lineages of the Fifth Dalai Lama

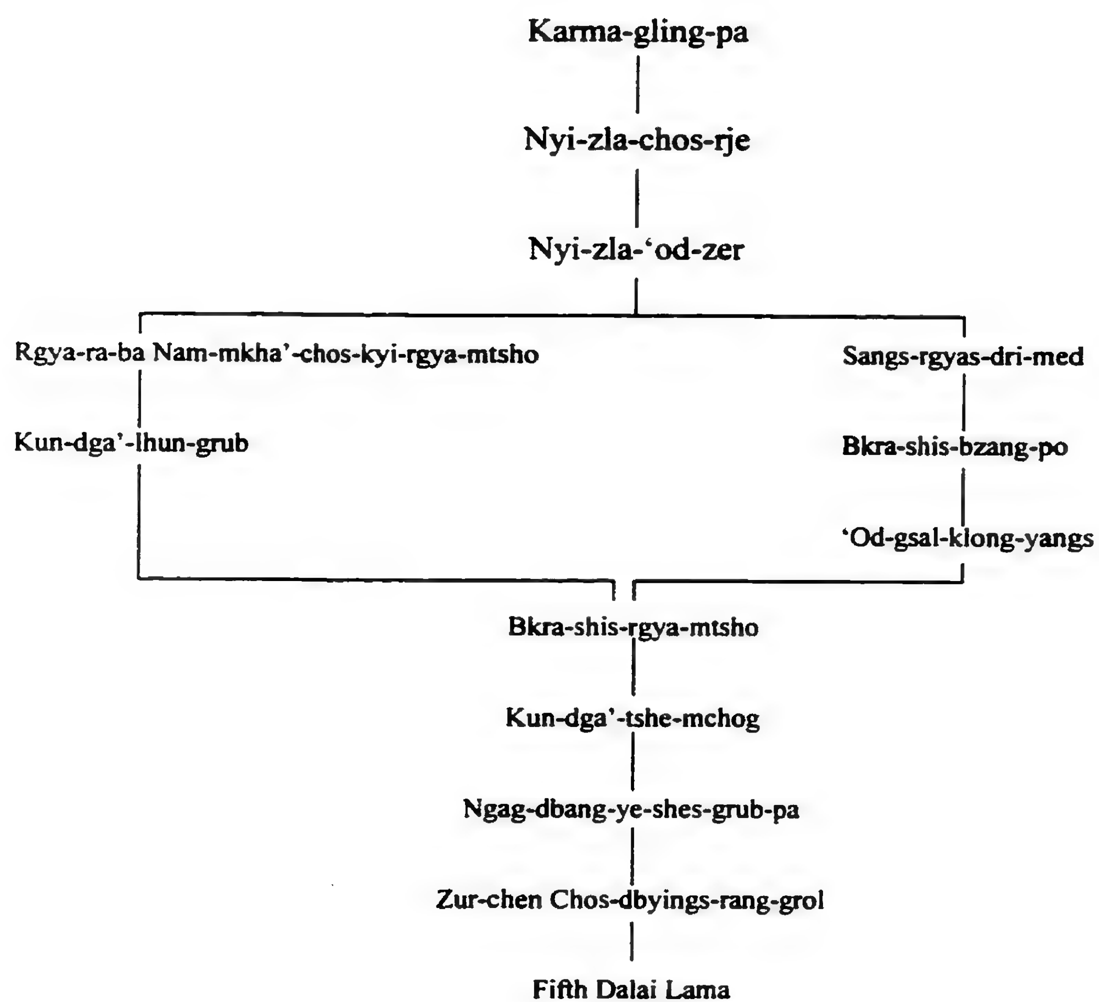


Table 5. Dar-gyas-chos-sding and Smin-grol-gling Lineages

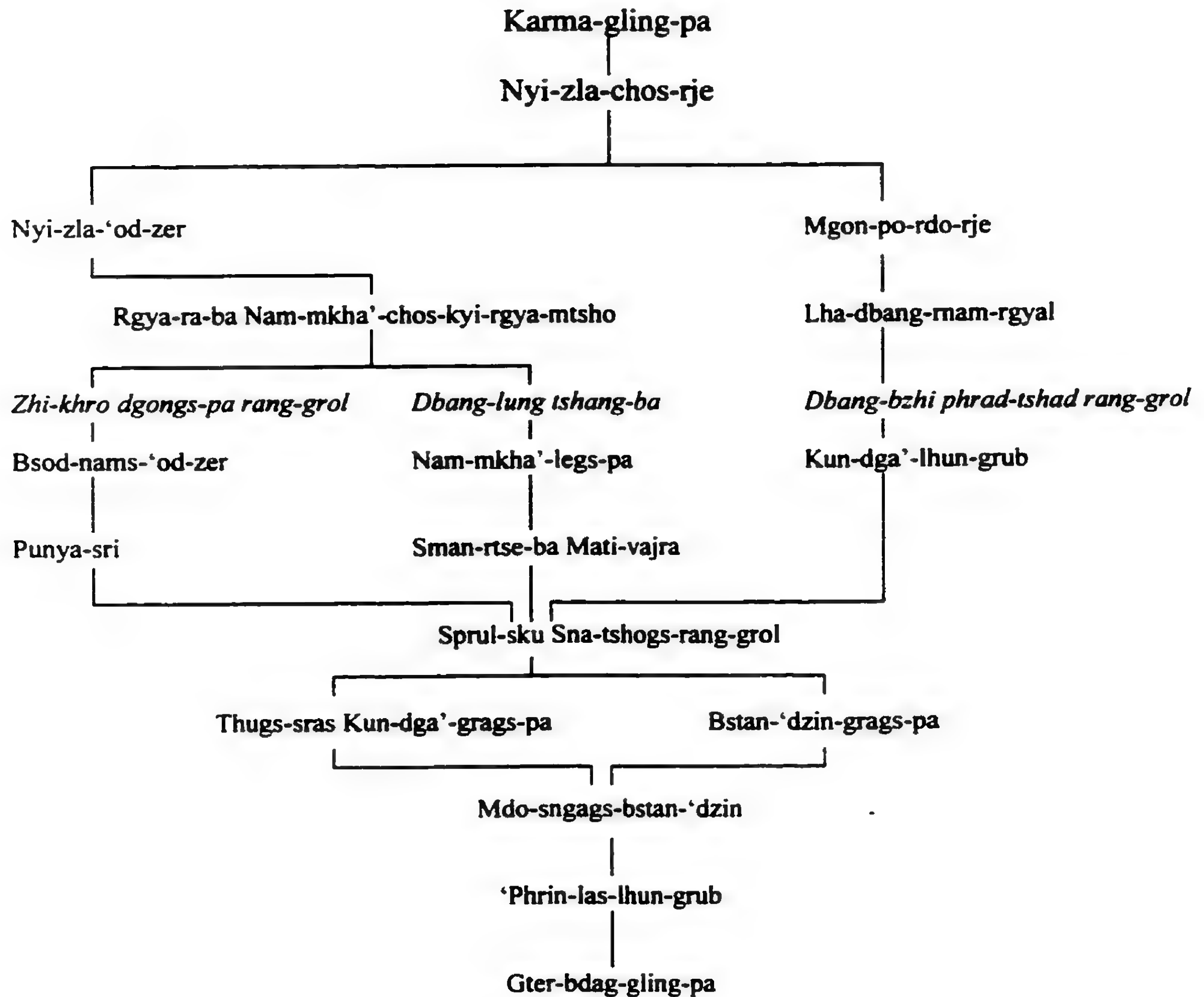


Table 6. Rtse-le, Thang-'brog, and Lha-lung Lineages



Table 7. Zur-mang Lineage



Appendix 3: Manuscripts, Blockprints, Reprint Editions, and Indices of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*

B1: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol las thos-grol chen-mo'i skor*. Paro, Bhutan, 1976. I(Bhu)-Tib-82; 76-905033. Tachikawa (Vol.II) 3557 IASWR SB-2732. J. van Manen Inv. No. 2740/H12, 19 & 187. Printed from blocks carved in 1943 through the efforts of Nor-bu-bzang-po, Bhutanese Lo-phyag to the Lhasa government and preserved at Bskyed-chu-lha-khang in Spa-gro, Bhutan. LC Acquisition Project 1.[1] Text produced from blocks identical to those used in printing B1a, B4, and DH. (18 titles, 283 folios).

1	Chos nyid bar do'i gsol 'debs thos grol chen mo (36 folios, 71 sides)
2	Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (21 folios, 41 sides)
3	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (3 folios, 5 sides)
4	Bar do'i rtsa tshig (3 folios, 5 sides)
5	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (4 folios, 7 sides)
6	Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (35 folios, 69 sides)
7	Btags grol phung po rang grol (25 folios, 49 sides)
8	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (3 folios)
—	Thugs rje chen po ma rig mun sel—Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (2 folios, 3 sides)
9	'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (25 folios, 49 sides)
10	Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (15 folios)
11	Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol (18 folios, 35 sides)
12	Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (8 folios, 15 sides)
13	Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs nges don rang grol (6 folios)
14	'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (12 folios, 23 sides)
15	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (24 folios, 47 sides)
16	Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog (12 folios 23 sides)
17	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (26 folios, 51 sides)
18	Thos grol chen mo'i skor gyi dkar chag mthong bas don gsal (4 folios, 3 sides)

B1a: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol las bar-do thos-grol chen-mo*. Delhi, 1993. J. van Manen Inv. No. 2740/H12, 19 & 187. Reproduced from a print from the Spa-gro-rdzong blocks by Konchhog Lhadrepa. LC Acquisition Project 4. Text produced from blocks identical to those used in printing B1, B4, and DH. (17 titles, 280 folios).

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[1] The Library of Congress acquisition program was described to me by Gene Smith as follows: "There were a number of defined projects under which these individual texts and collections were acquired and distributed. The first and most important special project was to reprint all blocks in the Cis-Himalayan region, northern India, Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan [LC Acquisition Project 1]. Second, there was an attempt to produce the best editions of all liturgical presentations of the major monasteries and sectarian traditions [LC Acquisition Project 2]. The third principle was to produce the most complete corpus of each cycle as defined by the chief lamas of the transmissions [LC Acquisition Project 3]. Fourth, in the early days of the program, i.e. until about 1972, the field office acquired almost any new publication that appeared in South Asia under the grounds that our participating libraries might not have other editions [LC Acquisition Project 4." (e-mail communication of May 29, 1998).

1. Sku gsum bla ma'i mal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (3-7)
2. Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (9-79)
3. Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (81-121)
4. Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (123-127)
5. Bar do'i rtsa tshig (129-133)
6. Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (135-141)
7. Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (143-211)
8. Btags grol phung po rang grol (213-260)
9. Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (261-266)
10. Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (267-317)
11. Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha la (319-348)
12. Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (349-395)
13. Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (397-426)
14. 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (427-475)
15. 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (477-498)
16. Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol (499-533)
17. Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (535-549)

B2: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol las bar-do'i gsal-'debs thos-grol chen-mo bklag-chog-tu bkod-pa 'khrul-snang rang-grol.* 1976. I(Bhu)-Tib-118; 77-902202. Printed from blocks preserved at Bum-thang Bkra-shis-chos-gling-pho-brang. Originally arranged for publication by Nges-don-bstan-'dzin-bzang-po (Rdzogs-chen III, 1759-1792). Includes supplements from various traditional tantric scriptures and liturgical works. LC Acquisition Project 1. (17 titles, 177 folios).

1. Bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo bklag chog tu bkod pa 'khrul snang rang grol (1-14b.4)
2. Sku gsum bla ma'i mal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (14b.4-15b.2)
3. Zhi khro'i brgyud 'debs (15b.2-16b.2)
4. Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha la (22b.4-30b.2)
5. Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (31b.5-43b.3)
6. Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (43b.3-44b.1)
7. Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (44b.1-62b.5)
8. Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (62b.5-74a.4)
9. Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (74a.4-94a.1)
10. Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (94a.1-95a.2)
11. Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig) (95a.3-96a.2)
12. Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (96a.2-97a.4)
13. Zab gsang rdzogs pa chen po mkha' 'gro snying thig btags grol (97a.4-105b.4)
14. Btags grol phung po rang grol (105b.4-117b.5)
15. Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (117b.5-123b.3)
16. Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (123b.3-134b.6)

— Thugs rje chen po ma rig mun sel—Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (134b.6-135.2)

17. Kun tu bzang po'i smon lam (135b.2-138a.5)

B3: "Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol." In Kong-sprul-blo-gros-mtha'-yas, *Rin-chen gter-mdzod.* Paro, Bhutan: Ngodrup and Sherab Drimay, 1976: vol. 4, fols. 1-281. I(Bhu)-Tib-124; 77-900739. Stod-lung Mtshur-phu redaction, with supplemental texts from the Dpal-spungs redaction and other manuscripts. LC Acquisition Project 3. (10 titles, 94 folios).

1 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (1-2)
2 Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (3-23)
3 Zhi khro'i bdag bskyed mdor bsdus dgongs pa rang grol (27-29)
4 Dbang gi sta gon sngon 'gro rin chen sgron me'i lhan thabs gsal bar bkod pa the tshom rang grol (31-49)
5 Smin byed sgo 'byed dbang skur 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol la kha skong phyag bzhes kyis brgyan pa 'brel tshad rang grol (51-115)
6 Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan (117-131)
7 Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bsnyen yig mdor bsdus rnam grol don gsal (133-145)
8 Chos nyid bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol gyi ngo sprod car phog khyer ba deb zhig (147-187)
9 Cho ga sdig sgrib rnam par sbyong ba (189-276)
10 Bka' srung sde bdun mchod mdor bsdus pa (277-279)

B4: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol las thos-grol chen-mo'i skor*. Paro, Bhutan, 1977. I(Bhu)-Tib-149; 79-902879. Printed from blocks carved in 1943 through the efforts of Lo-phyag Nor-bu-bzang-po. A collection of texts for use in the practice initiated by H.H. Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (1904-1987) and his followers. LC Acquisition Project 2. Text produced from blocks identical to those used in printing B1, B1a, and DH (18 titles, 282 folios, 563 pages).

1 Thos grol chen mo'i skor gyi dkar chag mthong bas don gsal (4 folios, 3 sides)
2 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (36 folios, 71 sides)
3 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (21 folios, 41 sides)
4 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (3 folios, 5 sides)
5 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (3 folios, 5 sides)
6 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (4 folios, 7 sides)
7 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (35 folios, 69 sides)
8 Btags grol phung po rang grol (25 folios, 49 sides)
9 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (3 folios)
— Thugs rje chen po ma rig mun sel—Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (2 folios, 3 sides)
10 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (25 folios, 49 sides)
11 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (15 folios)
12 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol (18 folios, 35 sides)
13 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (8 folios, 15 sides)
14 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs (6 folios)
15 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (12 folios, 23 sides)
16 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (24 folios, 47 sides)
17 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog (12 folios, 23 sides)
18 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (26 folios, 51 sides)

B5: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol chos-skor*. Thimphu, Bhutan, 1978. I(Bhu)-Tib-165; 79-903061. Printed from blocks preserved at Bum-thang Thar-pa-gling monastery in Bhutan. Interpretations by Smin-gling Lo-chen Dharma-śrı (1654-1717). LC Acquisition Project 1 (7 titles, 101 folios, 201 pages).

1 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs nges don rang grol (2 folios)
2 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (2 folios)

3 Cho ga sdig sgrib rnam par sbyong ba (58 folios)
4 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (7 folios)
5 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (12 folios)
6 Bka' srung sde bdun mchod mdor bsdus pa (2 folios, 3 sides)
7 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (18 folios)

BL: Tibetan manuscripts and blockprints held in the India Office of the British Library. Catalogue numbers listed both for the Library's own pressmarks in the rare mss. department (OR) and for the database catalogue developed by Ulrich Pagel (#). References supplied by Burkhard Quessel, Curator of the Tibetan Collections.

684; OR Tib I 228 ms [=LK, Denwood 438 (MS K 25)] (4 titles, 96 folios)

1 Chos nyid zhi ba'i bar do ngo sprod pa'i thos grol chen mo (31 folios)
2 Khro ba'i bar do ngo sprod chos nyid thos grol chen mo (18 folios)
3 Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sgron pa'i smon lam 'jigs rang grol (36 folios; fols. 7-36=Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod)
4 Bar do'i chos bshad pa gnad lde mig (11 folios)

688; OR Tib CC 61 ms [=Denwood 520] (7 folios)

1 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol

2085; OR 13813 ms (9 folios)

1 Karma gling pa'i zhi khro'i dbyangs gdongs gzur mang lugs phyog gcig tu bkod pa bzhugs pa'i dbu'o

2185, 2198-2201, 2203; OR 5355.1, 10-13, 15 ms (6 titles, 158 folios)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsol 'debs thos grol chen mo (79 folios)
2 Bar do'i rtsa tshig drug ma (7 folios)
3 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (17 folios)
4 Zhing khams lnga'i smon lam thong bar rang grol (4 folios)
5 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs chen mo (48 folios)
6 Phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' ram 'da' sgron pa'i smon lam (3 folios)

2686; OR 19999d.21.1 ms (26 folios)

1 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol

3000; OR 19999d.23 bp (35 folios)

1 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod

3073; OR 19999d.110 bp (4 folios)

1 Thos grol chen mo'i skor gyi dkar chag mthong bas don gsal

3270-3286; OR 19999n.248-264 bp (Bstan-rgyas-gling) [=CM?] (17 titles)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (36 folios)
2 [Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa, =BL 3271]
3 [Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam, =BL 3272]
4 [Bar do'i rtsa tshig, =BL 3273]
5 [Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam, =BL 3274]
6 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (35 folios)
7 Btags grol phung po rang grol (25 folios)
8 [Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma, =BL 3277]
9 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol
10 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (15 folios)
11 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol (18 folios)
12 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (8 folios)
13 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs (6 folios)
14 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (12 folios)
15 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (24 folios)
16 [Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog, =BL 3285]
17 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (25 folios)

3312-3319; OR 15190.1-8 ms (8 titles, 405 folios)

1 Dam tshig thams cad kyi nyams chag skong ba'i lung lnga bshags pa thams cad kyi rgyud dri ma med pa'i rgyal po (117 folios)
2 Chos sku kun bzang che mchog he ru ka (Bar do rnam pa drug gi rtsa tshig) (21 folios)
3 Zhi khro'i chos spyod bag chags rang grol (32 folios)
4 Bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya ba chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod (65 folios)
5 Zab chos zhi khro'i dgongs pa rang grol gyi thos grol chen mo yid bzhin nor bu (Srid pa bar do ngo sprod) (41 folios)
6 Chos zhi khro'i dgongs pa rang grol las rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol bstan (26 folios)
7 Zhi khro'i rigs brgya 'dus pa yi btags grol phung po rang grol (26 folios)
8 Rnal 'byor gyi dam tshig bkang ba (77 folios)

3432-3447; OR 19999z.11.1-12 bp (Bstan-rgyas-gling) [=CM?] (16 titles, 260+ folios)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsol 'debs thos grol chen mo (36 folios)
2 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (21 folios)
3 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
4 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (3 folios)
5 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (4 folios)
6 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (35 folios)
7 Btags grol phung po rang grol (25 folios)
8 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (5 folios)
9 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (25 folios)
10 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (18 folios)
11 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (8 folios)
12 Brgyud pa'i gsol-'debs (6 folios)
13 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (12 folios)
14 Zhi khro klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (24 folios)

15 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog (12 folios)
16 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (26 folios)

CH: *Kar-gling zhi-khro*. Ch'eng-tu: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-khang-gis bskrun-nas bkram, 1992. Ch-Tib 123; 93-927830. (21 titles, 387 folios).

1 Rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol (1-22)
2 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (25-74)
3 Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (75-82)
4 Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (85-238)
5 Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (239-284)
6 'Dzab bzlas tshangs pa'i sgra dbyangs 'khor 'das rang grol (297-306)
7 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang (315-326)
8 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (329-360)
9 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (371-422)
10 Nyams chags sdig sgrib thams cad bshags pa'i rgyal po na rag dong sprug (423-450)
11 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (457-460)
12 Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (461-512)
13 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (513-526)
14 Bskang bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol (527-536)
15 Bram ze dung gi phreng ba can gyi lo rgyus (553-560)
16 Kar gling zhi khro'i gnas 'dren gyi mtshams sbyor snying por dril ba (561-610)
17 Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi dbang bsdus (631-682)
18 Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi rjes kyi rim pa gsal ba'i me tog (685-694)
19 Rigs drug gnas 'dren bsdus pa (709-728)
20 Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan (751-770)
21 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (771-774)

CM: (*Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*). Blockprint from Rgyal-rtse (Gyantse) purchased in 1919 by Major W. L. Campbell. List of contents printed in W. Y. Evans-Wentz and Kazi Dawa Samdup, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927; reprint, 1960, p. 71n.1. [=BL 3270 ff. ?]. (17 titles)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo [=BL 3270, 36 folios]
2 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa
3 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
4 Bar do'i rtsa tshig
5 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam
6 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod [=BL 3275, 35 folios]
7 Btags grol phung po rang grol [=BL 3276, 25 folios]
8 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma
9 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol [=BL 3278, 0 folios ?]
10 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol [=BL 3279, 15 folios]
11 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol [=BL 3280, 18 folios]
12 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs [=BL 3281, 8 folios]
13 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs [=BL 3282, 3443, 6 folios]
14 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol [=BL 3283, 12 folios]

15 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol [=BL 3284. 24 folios]
16 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog
17 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol [=BL 3286. 25 folios]

DH: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol las bar-do thos-grol-gyi skor.* Dharamsala, Kangra H.P., India: Tibetan Cultural Printing Press, 1994. Printed from blocks carved in 1943 through the efforts of Lo-phyag Nor-bu-bzang-po. Commercial edition. Text produced from blocks identical to those used in printing B1, B1a, and B4. (19 titles, 296 folios).

1 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (1-5)
2 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (7-57)
3 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (59-129)
4 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (131-171)
5 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (173-177)
6 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (179-183)
7 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (185-191)
8 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (193-261)
9 Btags grol phung po rang grol (263-311)
10 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (313-319)
— Thugs rje chen po ma rig mun sel—Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (319-321)
11 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (323-371)
12 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (373-402)
13 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol (403-437)
14 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (439-453)
15 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs (455-466)
16 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (467-489)
17 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (491-537)
18 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog (539-561)
19 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (563-592)

DJTY: *Rin-chen gter-mdzod-kyi thob-yig.* Bdud-'joms 'Jigs-bral-ye-shes-rdo-rje (1904-1987). Dal-hor, 1968. I-Tib-1148. (83 titles).

I. Smin-byed
1 Sngon 'gro rin chen gsal sgron ltar dngos sta phral ba
2 Dngos gzhi (ras bris kyi dkyil 'khor la brten nas spros bcas bum dbang chen) phrad tshad rang grol
3 Dbang bsdus pa gtor dbang Reg pa don ldan
4 Mchog dbang gong ma gsum
Gsang dbang
Sher dbang
Tshig dbang
5 Mtha' rten gtor dbang dang mnga' gsol
6 Dbang 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol

II. Khrid
7 Bar do drug gi khrid rim zer 'debs ngo sprod dang bcas pa nyams khrid

III. Lung

D. Rdzogs-rim-gyi skor

40 Sa bcad lde mig rang grol gsal bar bkod pa —Nyi zla 'od zer
41 Gsol 'debs sku gsum klong yangs
42 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spang ma rang grol
43 Bar do'i smar khrid nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol gyi sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dul byed kyi lhan thabs—Nyi zla 'od zer
44 Sngon 'gro thun mong ma yin pa
45 De'i khrid rim bzhi'i ngag 'don o rgyan chen po'i chos spyod nas gsung pa—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
46 Bla ma'i gsung dpang du bzhag ste—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
47 Dngos gzhi rdzogs rim bar do drug gyi nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol (Bar do drug gi khrid yig chen mo)
Skye gnas bar do'i khrid yig kun gzhi rang grol
Rmi lam bar do'i khrid yig 'khrul pa rang grol
Bsam gtan bar do'i khrid yig rig pa rang grol
'Chi kha bar do'i khrid yig dran pa rang grol
Chos nyid bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol
Srid pa bar do'i khrid yig srid pa rang grol
48 De drug gi rgyab chos 'khrul pa rang grol rnams

E. Ngo-sprod-kyi skor

49 Ngo sprod thams cad kyi sngon 'gro dur khrod du bam ro bskyal ba la rten nas mi rtag pa'i bskul ma ngo sprod pa
50 Kham sa'i mi mo la brten nas rnam shes 'byung 'jug gnas gsum gyi ngo sprod—Rnam rgyal bzang po
51 Rig pa mngon gsum du ngo sprod pa gcer mthong rang grol
52 Rdzogs chen sku gsum ngo sprod
53 Sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol
54 Shal rdo'i ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol
55 Gzhi'i 'od gsal ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs
56 Mar me'i ngo sprod
57 Chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
58 Bar do'i thos grol gyi ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi lag len rnams—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
59 Srid pa bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
60 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod dge sdig rang gzugs ston pa'i gdams pa [or] Me long srid pa rang grol
61 De'i lhan thabs dbyangs snyan lha'i gandhe
62 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (Dpe'u ris)
63 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (rgya skad can)
64 'Chi bslu'i 'khor lo bri thabs (Dpe'u ris dang bcas pa)
65 Rmi lam bar do thos grol chos kyi che ba bskyed byed—Nyi zla 'od zer
66 Zhi khro 'dus pa'i btag grol phung po rang grol
67 De'i don bsdus rang grol snying po
68 Btags grol 'khor lo rgyas 'bring bsdus gsum bri thabs
69 De gsum ka'i dpe'u ris
70 Btags grol 'khor lo chen mo'i lag len zin bris—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
71 Rdzogs chen 'khor 'das rang grol gyi rgyud las btags grol bcad thabs kyi le'u
72 Sangs rgyas byang sems rnams ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam'jigs pa rang grol (thos grol gyi cha lag)
73 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (thos grol gyi cha lag)

74 Bar do'i 'phrang sgrol (thos grol gyi cha lag)
75 Bar do'i 'jigs skyob kyi smon lam (thos grol gyi cha lag)

F. Thabs-lam-kyi skor
76 'Od sgo bde ba chen po'i khrid 'dod chags rang grol (yang zab bcud bsdus)
77 'Dod chags lam khyer rigs brgyud bzhag thabs
78 'Og sgo bde chen rang grol gyi nyams khrid gud sbas don bsdus zab khrid bde chen rang grol—Nyi zla 'od zer

G. Bstan-srung-gi skor
79 Zhi khro'i bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las dgra bgegs rang grol
80 De'i mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol gnyis ka'i mjug rdzogs tshig can
81 Phud rabs gsol kha 'dod yon rang grol mdzad byang med pa tshig lhug
82 Rtsa gsum gtor bsngos lag len don bsdus snying po—Nyi zla 'od zer
83 Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol dang thugs rje chen po padma zhi khro'i lung bstan bka' rgya ma

DLSY: *Gsan-yig of the Fifth Dalai Lama.* Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho (1617-1682). Title page: *Zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thob-yig gaṅgā'i chu-rgyun las glegs-bam gsum-pa* (*Gsan-yig gaṅgā'i chu-rgyun*). 4 volumes. Delhi: Nechung and Lhakhar, 1970: vol. 4, fols. 86.3-91.3. I-Tib-739; 78-918067. (61 titles).

I. Them-byang lo-rgyus lung-bstan
1 Thems byang zin bris—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
2 Bla ma brgyud pa'i lo rgyus chos 'byung nor bu'i 'phreng ba—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
3 Spyi don lung bstan gsal byed 'od kyi dra ba

II. Smin-byed dbang-sgrub bskyed-rim
4 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol
5 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol
6 Chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
7 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
8 Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar 'phreng tshor ba rang grol
9 Las byang chung ba tshor grol snying po
10 Klong bshags brjod pa rang grol
11 Sbyin sreg gi sngon 'gro sta gon bcu gnyis gyis bstan pa
12 Dngos gzhi sbyin sreg 'phrin las rang grol
13 Zhi ba'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i yig chung—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
14 Rgyas pa'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i yig chung—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
15 Dbang gi sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i yig chung—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
16 Drag po'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i yig chung—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
17 Las bzhi so so dang spyi'i sbyin sreg gi yig chung (dbe ris dang bcas pa)—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
18 Thugs dam bkang ba'i rim pa bkang chen bzhi pa—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
19 Dbang gi sngon 'gro'i lhan thabs—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
20 Dbang bskur gnas spar 'gro drug rang grol
21 Tshe 'das gnas 'dren rigs drug rang grol
22 Dbang bzhi phrad tshad rang grol gyi sngon 'gro rin chen gsal ba'i sgron me
23 Dbang bzhi phrad tshad rang grol gyi sprod bcas bum dbang chen mo (dkyil 'khor gyi dbe ris dang bcas pa)

24 Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan
25 Mtha' rten rjes kyi dbang bskur gsal ba'i me long
26 Gsang dbang bde chen rang grol (mchog gong ma zab khyad can)

III. Grol-byed thos-pa dang btags-pas grol-ba'i rdzogs-rim

27 Sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dul byed thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor —Sūryacandraraśmi
28 Sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dul byed kyi lhan thabs—Sūryacandraraśmi
29 Gsol 'debs sku gsum klong yangs gsol 'debs dug gsum rang grol
30 Khrid kyi sa bcad lde mig rang grol—Sūryacandraraśmi
31 Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi 'khrid
Skye gnas bar do'i 'khrid yig kun gzhi rang grol
Rmi lam bar do'i 'khrid yig 'khrul pa rang grol
Bsam gtan bar do'i 'khrid yig rig pa rang grol
'Chi kha bar do'i 'khrid yig 'pho ba dran pa rang grol
Chos nyid bar do'i 'khrid yig mthong ba rang grol
Srid pa bar do'i 'khrid yig srid pa rang grol
32 Bar do drug ga'i 'khrid kyi rgyab chos 'khrul pa rang grol
33 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol
34 Sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol
35 Btags grol phung po rang grol (dbe ris dang bcas pa)
36 Btags grol 'khor lo chen po'i lag len zin bris—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
37 Btags grol bsdus don rang grol snying po
38 Btags grol bcad thabs dang bklag thabs 'khor 'das rang grol
39 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol
40 'Chi blu 'jigs pa rang grol po ti smug chung las bkol ba
41 Dur khrod du bam ro bskyal bar brten nas mi rtag pa'i bskul mar ngo sprod pa—Rnam rgyal bzang po
42 Kham sa'i mi mo la brten nas rnam shes 'byung 'jug gnas gsum ngo sprod mdo le ma'i gtam rgyud dang bcas—Rnam rgyal bzang po
43 Gzhi'i 'od gsal ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
44 Chos nyid bar do thod rgal gyi ngo sprod mthong bas rang grol—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
45 Ngo sprod mthong bas rang grol gyi mar me'i ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
46 Shel rdo ngo sprod mthong bas rang grol—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
47 Shel nyi ma 'dra 'bag gsum la brten nas sku gsum ngo sprod—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
48 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa rang grol
49 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' ra mdar spran pa'i smon lam 'jigs pa rang grol
50 Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig bdag la skye gnas ma
51 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam gti mug drag po ma
52 Dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs tshangs dbyangs lha'i gandhi—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
53 Srid pa bar do'i khyad par nyi shu
54 Bar do'i 'jigs pa skyob pa'i smon lam
55 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi gsol 'debs

IV. Thabs-lam la brten-pa'i rdzogs-rim

56 'Od sgo bde ba chen po 'dod chags rang grol gyi 'khrid gzhung chen mo thabs lam thams cad kyi snying po
57 Zab 'khrid kyi sa bcad—Guru Nyi zla 'od zer

GK: *Sga-rje khams-gzhung dgon-pa'i phyag-bzhes grub-thob karma-gling-pa'i gter-byon zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol-gyi chos-sde.* Dharamsala, Kangra H.P., India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1988. I-Tib-3056. Compiled by Khams-sprul 'Jam-dbyangs-don-grub. LC Acquisition Project 2. (86 titles, 537 folios)

70 Na rag bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol (733-837)
71 Tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug skabs su thog mar sku gsung thugs kyi dbang gsum bskur ba (839-842)
72 Dbang bzhi 'phrang tshad rang grol gyi rjes kyi rim pa gsal ba'i me tog (843-848)
73 Na rag bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol gyi zin bris—Rāgasya (849-939)
74 'Dod yon bsngo ba (941-951)
75 'Dod gsol bsngo ba (953-955)
76 Mtshan byang bsreg skabs gzungs sngags bzla ba rnams yod (957-961)
77 Hūṃ Vajra Citta Aḥ... (zhi khro'i rtsa sngags rgyas pa) (963-966)
78 Sgrib sbyang yig chung (967-968)
79 Oṃ mahā śunyata... (byang ccha 'debs chog) (969-970)
80 Tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol las nye bar bsdus pa sdug bsngal rang grol (971-1010)
81 'Phags pa'i tshogs kyi pho brang du... (1011-1012)
82 O' na nam mkha' dang mnyam pa'i... (1013-1016)
83 De nas mtshan byang dar gyi gdon gyogs bcings (gdong gyogs dang me tog phreng ba sbyin pa) (1017)
84 Tshe 'das rig pa'i me tog 'di... (me tog dor nas gsang mtshan 'dogs pa) (1019-1022)
85 Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo las nye bar bsdus pa thos pa rang grol—Kāmalamati (1023-1062)
86 Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi karma chags med rtsa tho chen mo'i bsdus don rang gi nyams len khyer bde gung du bkol ba—Khams smyon Padma bdud 'dul (1063-1074)

JVM: Johan van Manen collection housed in the Library of the Kern Institute, Leiden. References provided by Henk Blezer.

Inv. No. 2740/H12 [=B1, B4, DH] (17 titles)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
2 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa
3 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
4 Bar do'i rtsa tshig
5 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam
6 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod
7 Btags grol phung po rang grol
8 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma
9 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol
10 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol
11 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol
12 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs
13 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs nges don rang grol
14 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol
15 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol
16 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog
17 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag

Inv. No. 2740/H19 (4 titles)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
2 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa
3 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
4 Bar do'i rtsa tshig

Inv. No. 2740/H187 (15 titles)

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
2 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa
3 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
4 Bar do'i rtsa tshig
5 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam
6 Btags grol phung po rang grol
7 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma
8 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol
9 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol
10 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol
11 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs
12 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs nges don rang grol
13 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol
14 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog
15 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag

KS: *Bar-do'i thos-grol: The Tibetan Book of the Dead by the Great Acharya Shri Singha*. Varanasi: E. Kalsang Lhundup, Buddhist Temple, 1969. Handwritten print based on a blockprint edition arranged by Dil-mgo Mkhyen-rtse Bkra-shis-dpal-'byor (1910-1991) and preserved at the Jo-khang-ri-khrod of Dben-dgon monastery in Gangtok. (14 titles, 122 pages)

1 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (1-3)
2 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (4-43.6)
3 Khro bo'i bar do 'char 'tshul bstan pa (43.7-69)
4 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (70-109)
5 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (110-113.5)
6 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (113.6-115.1)
7 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (115.2-117.2)
8 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (117.3-119)
9 Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (120-130)
10 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (131-146)
11 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (147-168.10)
12 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (168.11-192.6)
13 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (192.7-212.13)
14 Rdzogs pa chen po'i lo rgyus mdo byang po ti smug chung las 'chi bslu zab mo (212.14-222)

NE: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. Solu, Nepal, 1970. N-Tib-1159; 74-919674. Printed from blocks preserved at Dgon-steng Bshad-sgrub-chos-gling monastery in Solu. LC Acquisition Project 1. (30 titles, 260 folios).

1	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (17 folios, 33 sides)
2	Cho ga thams cad kyi sngon du 'gro ba gzhi bdag dang bgegs la gtor ma 'bul thabs (3 folios)
3	Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (41 folios, 81 sides)
4	'Dzab bzlas tshangs pa'i sgra dbyangs 'khor 'das rang grol (4 folios)
5	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang (4 folios, 7 sides)
6	Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (3 folios)
7	Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (10 folios)
8	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (16 folios)
9	Nyams chags sdig sgrib thams cad bshags pa'i rgyal po na rag dong sprug (11 folios)
10	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (14 folios)
11	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (5 folios, 9 sides)
12	Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (2 folios)
13	Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (14 folios)
14	Brgya phyag bsdus pa (3 folios, 5 sides)
15	Rigs drug gnas 'dren bsdus pa (7 folios)
16	Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan (3 folios, 5 sides)
17	Bram ze dung gi phreng ba can gyi lo rgyus
18	Kar gling zhi khro'i gnas 'dren gyi mtshams sbyor snying por dril ba (5 folios, 9 sides)
19	Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi dbang bsdus (14 folios, 27 sides)
20	Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (8 folios)
21	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (7 folios, 13 sides)
—	Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig (appended, 21)
—	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (appended, 21)
—	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (appended, 21)
22	Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi rjes kyi rim pa gsal ba'i me tog (3 folios)
23	Na rag bskang bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol (20 folios, 39 sides)
24	Ro sreg gi cho ga ye shes 'od 'bar (14 folios, 27 sides)
25	Sāccha 'debs pa'i gsal byed legs tshogs lhun grub (3 folios)
26	Smin grol rgyab rten dang bcas pa'i brgyud tshul gyi gsol 'debs byin rlabs bdud rtsi'i gru char (3 folios, 5 sides)
27	Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bzhugs bzang bad tshul 'byed pa'i bsnyen yig dri bzang ngad ldan kun tu bzang po'i zhal ngo (17 folios)

PLKC: *Gter-ston karma-gling-pa'i gsung* (*Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*). Catalogue of manuscripts preserved in the Library of the Potala in Lhasa. List of contents printed in Dom-po-pa Thub-bstan-rgyal-mtshan, *Rnying-ma'i gsung-'bum dkar-chag*. Lhasa: Bod-ljongs gsar-dpe dpe-skrun-khang, 1992, pp. 127-130. [65 titles, 394 folios].

1	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya pa bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (9 folios)
2	Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (28 folios)
3	Las byang gi sngon 'gro'i rim pa (6 folios)
4	Las byang chung ba tshor grol snying po (8 folios)
5	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (10 folios)
6	Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya pa bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (6 folios)
7	Sbyin sreg phrin las rang grol gyi sngon 'gro sta gon rim pa (4 folios)

8 Me mchod kyi las byang sbyin sreg phrin las rang grol (8 folios)
9 Rgyas pa'i sbyin sreg gud du ston pa'i yig chung (6 folios)
10 Dbang gi sbyin sreg gud du ston pa'i yig chung (6 folios)
11 Drag po'i sbyin sreg gud du ston pa'i yig chung (7 folios)
12 Bskong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (8 folios)
13 Bskong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi dbang bskur 'gro drug rang grol (10 folios)
14 Dbang gi sngon 'gro lhan thabs (8 folios)
15 Na rag bskong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren (15 folios)
16 Sa bcad lde mig rang grol (4 folios)
17 Sngon 'gro thun mong ma yin pa rang rgyud sbyong bar byed pa'i khrid rim bzhi pa (6 folios)
18 Gsol 'debs sku gsum klong yangs rang grol
19 Bar do'i dmar khrid nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol (8 folios)
20 Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig kun gzhi rang grol (13 folios)
21 Spyi don gnyis pa bar do'i khrid yig 'phrul pa rang grol (7 folios)
22 Spyi don gsum pa bar do'i khrid yig rig pa rang grol (5 folios)
23 Spyi don bzhi pa 'pho ba dran pa rang grol (7 folios)
24 Spyi don lnga pa bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol (6 folios)
25 Spyi don drug pa bar do'i khrid yig srid pa rang grol (5 folios)
26 Bar do'i rgyab chos 'khrul pa rang grol (14 folios)
27 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (6 folios)
28 Sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol (6 folios)
29 Dam chos rdzogs pa chen po sku gsum ngo sprod (3 folios)
30 Sa dpyad rdo rje'i mdo 'dzin (1 folio)
31 Chos nyid bar do'i gsol 'debs thos grol chen mo (23 folios)
32 Srid bar do'i khyad par nyi shu bstan pa (2 folios)
33 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsol 'debs thos grol chen mo (7 folios)
34 Btags grol phung po rang grol (9 folios)
35 Btags grol phung po rang grol gyi don bsdus rang grol snying po (5 folios)
36 Btags grol 'khor lo chen mo'i lag len zin bris (7 folios)
37 Btags grol bca' thabs (2 folios)
38 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (8 folios)
39 Rdzogs pa chen po'i lo rgyus rin po che'i mdo byang (4 folios)
40 Dur khrod ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs mi rtag bskul 'debs (3 folios)
41 Ngo sprod thams cad kyi sngon 'gro dur khrod du bam ro skyel ba (4 folios)
42 Dam chos rdzogs pa chen po'i ngo sprod skor rnam shes 'byung 'jug gnas gsum gyi ngo sprod sogs (3 folios)
43 Ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi gzhi'i 'od gsal ngo sprod lhan thabs (6 folios)
44 Chos nyid bar do'i thod rgal ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol (14 folios)
45 Ngo sprod mthong bar rang grol gyi mar me'i ngo sprod lhan thabs (2 folios)
46 Shel rdo ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol (3 folios)
47 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa (2 folios)
48 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs dbyangs snyan lha'i ghan-rdi (7 folios)
49 Dam pa rigs brgya'i dkyil 'khor bkod pa (2 folios)
50 Zhi ba'i sbyin sreg gi dpe ris (2 folios)
51 Rgyas pa'i sbyin sreg gi dpe ris (2 folios)
52 Dbang gi sbyin sreg gi dpe ris (2 folios)
53 Drag po'i sbyin sreg gi dpe ris (2 folios)
54 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol nam mkha'i tshe gzungs brtag pa'i dpe ris (2 folios)
55 Btags grol 'khor lo chen po'i dpe ris (4 folios)
56 Btags grol 'khor lo 'bring po'i dpe ris (6 folios)

57	Btags grol 'khor lo chung ba'i dpe ris (3 folios)
58	Lho sgo'i cho ga rigs drug gnas 'dren gyi dpe ris (2 folios)
59	Gzhi'i 'od gsal gyi dpe ris (2 folios)
60	Ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi dpe ris (8 folios)
61	Zhi khro'i bka' srung sde bdun gyi phrin las (3 folios)
62	Dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdang bskang gdug pa rang grol (3 folios)
63	Dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi gsol ka 'dod yon rang grol (2 folios)
64	Dbang rnams kyi rgyab yig (5 folios)
65	Dkar chag (3 folios)

PY: *Dpal-yul phyag-srol kar-gling zhi-khro.* Delhi: Konchhog Lhadrepa, [1986?; reprint, 1997?]. Reproduced from a rare manuscript from Dpal-yul Monastery. LC Acquisition Project 2 (51 titles, 432 folios, 863 pages).

1	Gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol (1-20)
2	Thun mong gi mchod gtor byin brlabs (21-22)
3	Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (23-28)
4	Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (29-31)
5	Don brgyud gsol 'debs ming tshig rang grol (33-38)
6	Bskyed rim sngon 'gro lhan thabs (39-59)
7	Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (61-150)
8	'Dzab dgongs snying po rang grol (151-166)
9	Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (167-185)
10	Gsang dbang skang (187-188)
11	Dbang sgrub dus su bum pa sta gon bum sgrub dang bcas pa (189-202)
12	'Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang (203-212)
13	Zhi khro dgong pa rang grol gi gter srung sgam po lha rtse'i mchod gsol phrin las rang grol (213-218)
14	Bla ma rgyud pa'i phyag 'tshal byin rlabs phrin phung (219-228)
15	Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol (229-252)
16	Phyag 'tshal rje (253-264)
17	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (265-303)
18	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (305-338.4)
19	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (338.4-341.2)
20	Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig (341.2-343.6)
21	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (343.6-346.4)
22	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (346.4-350)
23	Bcu gsum pa tshogs kyi las rim nas bcu bzhi pa thugs dam bskul ba'i rim pa sogs (351-356)
24	Gnam chos las rtsa gsum spyi'i [gtor bsngo dang bskang ba] rgyun khyer bcas—[Mi 'gyur rdo rje'i gter ma] (357-358)
25	Zhi khro'i tshog kyi bstabs pa'i 'gugs gzhug khyer bde—[Mtshan ldan rdo rje kun bzang] (359-360)
26	...bla srog—Guru Chos dbang gi gter (361-376)
27	Guru... (377-388)
28	[gtor ma offerings ?] (389-398)
29	(untitled) (399-409)
30	(untitled) (411-416)
31	Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (417-440)

32	Phyag 'tshal ba'i dbu phyogs (441-447)
33	Sdig sgrib sbyong phyig yig [chung] 'dren pa (449-450)
34	Gsum rjes le'u... (451-461)
35	Zhi khro'i skong bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha rkyen gyi bskang bsdus (463-485)
36	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (487-491)
37	Bskang bshags... (493-506)
38	...dkyil 'khor [mar me'i smon lam ?] (507-514)
39	Bla ma rig 'dzin gyi mdongs skong rtog sgrib rang grol (515-523)
40	Zhi khro'i mdangs...skong...dkyil 'khor (525-540)
41	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi mdangs skong gdug pa rang grol (541-551)
42	Tshe 'das gnas 'dren bsdus pa (553-583)
43	Gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol khrigs su bkod pa (585-685)
44	Sgrib sbyong thos pa don ldan (687-689)
45	(untitled) (691-696)
46	Sangs rgyas gling pa'i zab gter las blangs ba'i... (697-698)
47	Gsang ngags me gsur (699-710)
48	Smin byed sgo 'byed dbang skur 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol la kha skong phyag bzhes kyis brgyan pa 'brel tshad rang grol (711-814)
49	(untitled) (815-820)
50	Zhi khro'i sgo nas phung po sreg sbyong bya ba'i lag len (821-846)
51	Phung po sreg sbyong gi kha skong (847-863)

RB: *Thos-grol dkar-chags dga'-bas 'dzum-bton ces-bya-ba.* Included in an unpublished manuscript of the *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* in the possession of Ri-bo-che Rje-drung Byams-pa-'byung-gnas of Padma-bkod. Typescript of E. Gene Smith. [12 titles, 254 folios].

1	Zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las chos spyod [= Chos spyod bag chags rang grol] (28 folios)
2	Zhi khro'i brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol bar do thos grol gyi cha lags (18 folios)
3	Thugs rje chen po padma zhi khro'i nyams khrid yang snying lam khyer las: Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (67 folios)
4	Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las: Btags grol phung po rang grol gyi don bsdus rang grol snying po (16 folios)
5	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (9 folios)
—	Bar do'i rtsa tshig (appended)
—	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (appended)
6	Srid pa'i bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (42 folios)
7	Bar do thos pa'i lam tshig chod par byed pa'i man ngag don bsdus thugs kyi nying khung thos grol 'bring po (23 folios)
8	Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las: Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod par rang grol (28 folios)
9	Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong (17 folios)
10	'Chi khar sangs rgyas pa khug pa lnga'i man ngag (6 folios)

S1: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.* Gangtok, Sikkim, 1972. I(Sik)-Tib-132; 72-906841. Tachikawa (Vol.I) 1237 IASWR R-1992. Printed from blocks preserved at the Jo-khang-ri-khrod of Dben-dgon monastery in Gangtok. Text arranged by Dil-mgo Mkhyen-rtse Bkra-shis-dpal-'byor (1910-1991) at the behest of one Kun-bzang-rgya-mtsho and printed under the auspices of the Do-lung Spyi-dpon [in Sikkim?]. LC Acquisition Project 1 (14 titles, 187 folios)

1 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (1-5)
2 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (6-69)
3 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (69-104)
— [dhāraṇi, appended, 104-106]
4 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (107-172)
5 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (173-211)
6 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (213-218.4)
7 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (218.4-221.4)
8 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (221.4-224.5)
9 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (224.5-228)
10 Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (229-253)
11 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (254-281)
12 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (282-324)
13 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (325-356)
14 Rdzogs pa chen po'i lo rgyus mdo byang po ti smug chung las 'chi bslu zab mo (357-373)

S2: *Badzra gu-ru'i phan-yon dang 'bru-'grel.* Gangtok, Sikkim, 1972. I(Sik)-Tib-192; 72-906583. Printed from blocks preserved at the Jo-khang-ri-khrod of Dben-dgon monastery in Gangtok. LC Acquisition Project 1. (10 folios, 19 pages).

1 Badzra gu ru'i phan yon dang 'bru 'grel

S3: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.* Gangtok, Sikkim, 1972. I(Sik)-Tib-209; 73-907041. Printed from blocks preserved at 'Ba'-nyag House in Gangtok. LC Acquisition Project 1. (10 titles, 121 folios, 241 pages).

1 Rnying ma spyi'i sngon 'gro skyabs sems dang dkar bgegs kyi gtor ma (5 folios, 9 sides)
2 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (2 folios, 3 sides)
3 Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (16 folios, 31 sides)
4 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba (5 folios)
5 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (12 folios, 23 sides)
6 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (17 folios, 33 sides)
7 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (16 folios, 31 sides)
8 Tshe 'das gnas 'dren bsdus pa (16 folios, 31 sides)
9 Rtsa gsum rab 'byams kyi bskang 'dus rin chen 'bar ba'i phreng ba (9 folios, 17 sides)
10 Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (18 folios)

SGA: (*Bar-do thos-grol*). Photocopy of a blockprint belonging to Lama Sherab Gyaltsen Amipa of the Tibetan Institute in Rikon, Switzerland. The print blocks appear to have been prepared at Lha-lung and preserved at the monastery of Bsam-gtan-gling in Skyid-grong. List of contents printed in Dieter M. Back, *Rig pa ṅo sprod gcer mthoṅ raṅ grol: Die Erkenntnislehre des Bar do thos grol.* Freiburger Beiträge zur Indologie, 18. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1987, p. 105. (9 texts, 136 folios).

1 Bar do thos grol gyi gsol 'debs rim pa tshogs rang grol (1-4a)
2 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (5-44a)
3 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (44a-70a)

4 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams ra mda' sprang pa'i smon lam (70a-78a)
— 'Jigs pa rang grol (appended, 4)
— Bar do'i rtsa tshig (appended, 4)
— Bar do 'phrang grol (appended, 4)
— Bar do 'jigs skyob ma (appended, 4)
5 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lags (79-95a)
6 Btags grol phung po rang grol gyi don bsdus rang grol (96-103a)
7 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (104-118a)
8 Rdzogs pa chen po'i lo rgyus las 'chi bslu zab mo (119-126)
9 Rig pa ngo sprod cer mthong rang grol (127-136a)

T1: *Sprul-sku karma-gling-pa'i gter-byang badzra gu-ru'i phan-yon dang 'bru-grel.* Ka-sbug (Ka-lon-spungs): Phun-gling gsung-rab rnams-gso rgyun-spel dpar-khang, 1962. I-Tib-74; sa 68-020980. Printed from blocks carved by Khams-sprul VIII Don-brgyud-nyi-ma. LC Acquisition Project 1. (5 folios).

1 Badzra gu ru'i phan yon dang 'bru 'grel

T2: *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol chos-spyod.* Yuru, Ladakh, 1969. I-Tib-582; 79-906375. Printed from blocks preserved at Gnyang-drung monastery. LC Acquisition Project 1(33 folios, 65 pages).

1 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag

T3: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.* Kelang, 1969. I-Tib-601; 75-907154. Tachikawa (Vol.I) 1233 IASWR R-285. Printed from blocks preserved in the Khang-gsar fortress (Gemur temple) in Gar-zhwa in Lahul-Spiti [?]. Edited and supplemented by Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (1647-1710). LC Acquisition Project 1 (17 titles, 228 folios, 456 pages).

1 Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo (28 folios, 55 sides)
2 Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa (17 folios, 33 sides)
3 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (3 folios, 5 sides)
4 Bar do'i rtsa tshig (3 folios, 5 sides)
5 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (4 folios, 7 sides)
6 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (29 folios, 57 sides)
7 Btags grol phung po rang grol (18 folios)
8 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (4 folios)
— Thugs rje chen po ma rig mun sel—Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa (2 folios, 3 sides)
9 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol (19 folios, 37 sides)
10 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol (13 folios, 25 sides)
11 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol (17 folios, 33 sides)
12 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs (7 folios, 13 sides)
13 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs (5 folios, 9 sides)
14 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol (9 folios, 17 sides)
15 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (21 folios, 41 sides)
16 Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog (11 folios, 21 sides)
17 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (22 folios, 43 sides)

T4: *Gti-mug gnyid-skrogs and Other Liturgical Texts from the Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.* Kelang, 1969. I-Tib-608; 72-913510. Printed from blocks preserved at the Rta-yul temple in Gar-zhwa, Lahul-Spiti [?]. LC Acquisition Project 1. (6 titles, 61 folios, 121 pages).

1	Gti mug gnyid skrogs (1-5a.5)
2	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (5a.1-47a.2)
3	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (47a.5-50b.1)
4	Bar do rnam pa drug gi rtsa tshig (50b.2-53a.3)
5	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (53a.3-58a.2)
6	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (58a.2-61a.3)

T5: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.* Sah›ranapura: Barak› Presa, c.1969. I-Tib-613; 76-927219. Commercial edition. LC Acquisition Project 4. (36 titles, 450 folios).

1	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (21 folios, 41 sides)
2	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (10 folios)
—	Bar do'i rtsa tshig (appended, 2)
—	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (appended, 2)
—	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (appended, 2)
3	Gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol (11 folios)
4	Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (4 folios)
5	Bskyed rim sngon 'gro lhan thabs (10 folios, 19 sides)
6	Sgom rim lhan skyes ye shes (8 folios)
7	Zhi khro'i mdun bskyed shin tu bsdus pa snod bcud rang grol (3 folios, 5 sides)
8	Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (62 folios, 123 sides)
9	Bskyed rim lhan thabs 'dzab dgongs grags stong tshangs dbyangs bzlas rang grol (10 folios, 19 sides)
10	'Dzab bzlas tshangs pa'i sgra dbyangs 'khor 'das rang grol (6 folios, 11 sides)
11	Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (11 folios, 21 sides)
12	'Dzab dgongs snying po rang grol (6 folios, 11 sides)
13	Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (3 folios, 5 sides)
14	Don brgyud gsol 'debs ming tshig rang grol (2 folios)
15	Bsgom rim lhan skyes rang grol (1 folio)
16	Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (18 folios, 35 sides)
17	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba (6 folios)
18	Bla ma rgyud pa'i phyag 'tshal byin rlabs phrin phung (4 folios, 7 sides)
19	Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (12 folios)
20	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (23 folios)
21	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (24 folios)
22	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (6 folios)
23	Zhi khro'i bskong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha rkyen gyi bskang bsdus (9 folios)
24	Bla ma rig 'dzin gyi mdongs skong rtog sgrib rang grol (4 folios)
25	Las bum sgrub pa'i cho ga dag byed chu rgyun (3 folios)
26	Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus las zhi khro'i bdag dbang (1 folio)

27 Skong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol (47 folios)
28 Dbang bskur 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol (21 folios)
29 Rigs drug gnas 'dren bsdus pa (9 folios)
30 Gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol khrigs su bkod pa (40 folios, 79 sides)
31 Tshe 'das gnas 'dren bsdus pa (13 folios)
32 Phung po sreg sbyong gi kha skong (1 folio)
33 Zhi khro'i sgo nas phung po sreg sbyong bya ba'i lag len (15 folios)

T6: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol*. New Delhi: Ngawang Topgay, 1972. I-Tib-887; 72-901751. Reprint, New Delhi, 1994. Arranged according to the tradition followed at Nalanda monastery in 'Phan-po. Commercial edition. LC Acquisition Project 4. (23 titles, 256 folios).

1 Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs bdud rtsi'i char rgyun (1-8)
2 Gsangs sngags rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol (9-27)
3 Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (29-35)
4 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (37-40)
5 Gsang sngags spyi'i mchod gtor byin gyis brlabs pa'i rim pa mdzad med bdud rtsi'i rgya mtsho (41-44)
6 Bskang ba nyams chag rang grol gyi bskyed rim sngon 'gro'i lhan thabs (44-60)
7 Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (61-177)
8 Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (179-204)
9 'Dzab bzlas tshangs pa'i sgra dbyangs 'khor 'das rang grol (205-218)
10 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba (218-225)
11 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (227-252.3)
12 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (254-293)
13 Skong bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (295-332)
14 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (332-345)
15 Las byang tshor ba rang grol snying po (353-361)
16 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (363-397)
17 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (399-403)
18 Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig (403.6-407.1)
19 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gi smon lam (407.1-411.2)
20 Bar do 'jigs skyobs ma rnams (411.2-416)
21 Bum dbang bsdus par bskur tshul dang shin tu bsdus pa gtor dbang bcas gcig tu sdebs nas nag 'gros su bkod pa thos tshad rang grol (417-482)
22 Rigs drug gnas 'dren nyung bsdus sgrigs chags (483-502)
23 Chos rgyal gser gyi lag pa zhes bya ba'i phyag mar me phul ba'i lo rgyus smon lam dang bcas pa (503-512)

T7: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol-gyi chos-skor*. 3 volumes. Delhi: Sherab Lama, 1975-76. I-Tib-1440; 75-903780. Tachikawa (Vol.I) 1239 IASWR SB-793 (Vol.II), SB796 (Vol.III); Tachikawa (Vol.II) 3559 IASWR SB-2574 (Vol.I). Reproduced from a manuscript collection found in the library of Bdud-'joms Rin-po-che (1904-1987). Authoritative edition. LC Acquisition Project 3. (66 titles in 3 volumes, 764 folios).

Volume 1

Volume 2

Volume 3

64 'Og sgo bde chen 'dod chags rang grol gyis nyams khrid gud du bkol ba don bsdus zab khrid bde ba rang grol (v.3, 439-481)
65 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba (v.3, 483-490)
66 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (v.3, 491-498)

T8: *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol.* 2 volumes. Kalimpong: Mani Dorji, 1979. I-Tib-1990: 79-905078. Reprinted in one volume as *Kar-gling zhi-khro.* New Delhi, c.1994. The tradition followed among the Rnying-ma-pa of eastern Bhutan. LC Acquisition Project 2. (38 titles in 2 volumes, 468 folios).

Volume 1

1 Gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol (v.1, 1-20)
2 Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (v.1, 21-28)
3 Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (v.1, 29-33)
4 Bskyed rim sngon 'gro lhan thabs (v.1, 35-56)
5 Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (v.1, 59-161)
6 Zhi khro'i las byang mchod pa'i skabs su mtshan sngags khā hi bsdus pa (v.1, 165-171)
7 Sgom rim lhan skyes ye shes (v.1, 177-192)
8 Zhi khro sgom rim chung ba lhan skyes rang grol (v.1, 193-196)
9 Zhi khro'i mdun bskyed shin tu bsdus pa snod bcud rang grol (v.1, 197-201)
10 'Dzab bzlas tshangs pa'i sgra dbyangs 'khor 'das rang grol (v.1, 203-211)
11 Bskyed rim lhan thabs 'dzab dgongs grags stong tshangs dbyangs bzlas rang grol (v.1, 213-229)
12 Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po (v.1, 233-249)
13 Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus las zhi khro'i bdag dbang (v.1, 251-252)
14 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang (v.1, 253-262)
15 Bka' srung sde bdun mchod mdor bsdus pa (v.1, 263-264)
16 Gter srung sgam po lha rtse'i mchod gsol phrin las rang grol (v.1, 267-272)
17 Zhi khro'i phyag 'tshal bsdus pa (v.1, 275-282)
18 Bla ma rgyud pa'i phyag 'tshal byin rlabs phrin phung (v.1, 283-290)
19 Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (v.1, 291-328)
20 Skong bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (v.1, 329-376)
21 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (v.1, 379-388)
22 Gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol khrigs su bkod pa (v.1, 391-471)

Volume 2

24 Don brgyud gsol 'debs ming tshig rang grol (v.2, 1-3)
25 Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (v.2, 5-38)
26 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (v.2, 39-62)
27 Sngags bshags sdig sgrib rang grol (v.2, 63-67)
28 Bskang bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol (v.2, 69-169)
29 Dbang gi dngos gzhi'i 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi spros bcas bum dbang chen mo (v.2, 171-217)

30 Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi gsang dbang bde chen rang grol la sogs dbang gong ma gsum gyi zab gsal khyad par can (v.2, 219-253)
31 Smin byed sgo 'byed dbang skur 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol la kha skong phyag bzhes kyis brgyan pa 'brel tshad rang grol (v.2, 255-351)
32 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (v.2, 353-386)
33 Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig (v.2, 387-389)
34 Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (v.2, 389-393)
35 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (v.2, 393-395)
36 Zhi khro'i sgo nas phung po sreg sbyong bya ba'i lag len (v.2, 397-417)
37 Phung po sreg sbyong gi kha skong (v.2, 419-432)
38 'Chi ka'i gdams ngag (v.2, 433-435)
39 Rigs drug gnas 'dren (v.2, 443-460)

TLSY: *Gsan-yig of Gter-bdag-gling-pa 'Gyur-med-rdo-rje of Smin-grol-gling.* Gter-bdag-gling-pa (1646-1714). Title page: *Zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thob-yig rin-chen byung-gnas.* Delhi: Sanje Dorje, 1974: fols. 388.7-391.4. I-Tib-1243. (65 titles).

I. Dbang

1 Rin chen gsal sgron
2 Phrad tshad rang grol
3 Reg pa don ldan

II. Khrid

4 Bar do drug gi khrid (rim zur 'debs dang ngo sprod dang bcas pa)

III. Lung

A. Lo-rgyus

5 Thems—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
6 Lo rgyus—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
7 Lung bstan gsal byed 'od kyi dra ba

B. Dbang-sgrub

8 Chos spyod
9 Zhi khro'i las byang rtsar 'phreng
10 Las byang chung ba
11 Klong bshags
12 Phyag 'tshal
13 Sbyin sreg gi sngon 'gro
14 Dngos gzhi cho ga
15 Las bzhi'i sbyin sreg so so'i yig chung—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
16 Las bzhi spyi bye brag gi yig chung ste lnga—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
17 Thugs dam bkang ba'i rim pa—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
18 Skong chen bzhi pa—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
19 Dbang gi sngon 'gro rin chen gsal sgron
20 Phrad tshad rang grol gi sprod bcas bum dbang
21 Mchog dbang gong ma gsum
22 Mtha' rten gsal ba'i me long
23 Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan
24 Dbang gi sngon 'gro'i lhan thabs—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho

25 Dbang bskur gnas spar tshe 'das gnas 'dren
26 Cha lag zas gtad

C. Rdzogs-rim

27 Sngon 'gro thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor—Sūryacandraraśmi
28 Rang rgyud 'dul byed—Sūryacandraraśmi
29 Gsol 'debs rim pa gnyis
30 Khrid kyi sa bcad lde mig—Nyi zla 'od zer
31 Khrid yig
Skye gnas bar do
Rmi lam bar do
Bsam gtan bar do
Chos nyid bar do
Srid pa bar do
32 Drug gi rgyab chos
33 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol
34 Sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol
35 Btags grol [bton pa ?]'i dpe'u ris
36 Lag len—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
37 Btags grol don bsdus
38 Bcad thabs
39 'Chi ltas brtag pa
40 'Chi blu po ti smug chung las bkol ba
41 'Chi zlog gshin rje'i gter chen lhan thabs glud rabs dang bcas pa—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho

D. Ngo-sprod

42 Dur khrod du bam ro ngo sprod
43 Lhan thabs—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
44 Mi mo la ngo sprod mdo le ma'i gtam rgyud dang bcas pa—Rnam rgyal bzang po
45 Chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo
46 Gzhi'i 'od gsal ngo sprod—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
47 Chos nyid bar do thod rgal gyi ngo sprod
48 Mar me'i ngo sprod—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
49 Shel rdo ngo sprod
50 Sku gsum ngo sprod—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
51 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod
52 (Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod) lhan thabs smon lam
53 Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig
54 'Phrang sgrol smon lam
55 Dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
56 Srid pa bar do'i khyad par nyi shu
57 'Jigs skyob pa'i smon lam
58 'Phrang sgrol gsol 'debs

E. Thabs-lam

59 'Od sgo bde ba chen gyi khrid
60 Rigs brgyud bzhag thabs
61 Sa bcad—Nyi zla 'od zer
62 Nyams khrid zur bkol—Nyi zla 'od zer

F. Bstan-srung

63 Dam can sde bdun gyi las byang—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
64 Mdangs bkang—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho
65 Gser skyems—Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho

WadB: *Bar-do thos-grol chen-mo.* Manuscripts and blockprints collected in 1904 under the supervision of Lieut. Col. L.A. Waddell and preserved at the Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz Berlin. Catalogue numbers and titles listed in Dieter Schuh, *Tibetische Handschriften und Blockdrucke. Teil 8 (Sammlung Wadd ell der Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin).* Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1981.

Wadd 84 bp (14 titles, 161 folios)

1 Bar do thos grol gyi dkar chag mthong ba kun grol (Wadd 84a, 2 folios)
2 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol (Wadd 84b, 22 folios)
3 Chos nyid bar do'i gsol 'debs thos grol chen mo (Wadd 84c, 49 folios)
4 Zhi khro'i klong bshag brjod pa rang grol (Wadd 84d, 22 folios)
5 Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod (Wadd 84e, 34 folios)
6 Dur khrod ngo sprod mi rtag bskul 'debs (Wadd 84f, 5 folios)
7 Ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi bzhi'i 'od gsal ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs (Wadd 84g, 5 folios)
8 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (Wadd 84h, 3 folios)
9 [no title] Incipit: namo ratnaguru : chos sku kun bzang yab yum dang : drug pa rdo rje chang chen la (Wadd 84i, 2 folios)
10 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs dbyangs snyan lha'i ghandhe (Wadd 84j, 5 folios)
— [Wadd 84k, missing?]
11 Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (Wadd 84l 1, 3 folios)
— Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (Wadd 84l 2, 3 folios)
12 Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig (Wadd 84m, 3 folios)
13 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (Wadd 84n, 3 folios)

Wadd 87 ms (3 titles, 146 folios)

1 [missing?]
2 Rdzogs chen dgongs pa rang grol las chos nyi bar do'i gsal 'debs (Wadd 87, 57 folios)
3 Rdzogs chen dgongs pa rang grol la khro bos bar do'i bsal 'debs (Wadd 87a, 33 folios)
4 Rdzogs chen dgongs pa rang grol las srid pa bar do'i gsal 'dabs (Wadd 87b, 56 folios)

ZDTY: *Zab-rgyas chos-kyi thob-yig dbyangs-can mgrin-rgyan.* Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul I Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal (1708-1736). Thimphu, Bhutan: Druk Sherig Press, 1984. I(Bhu)-Tib-390; 85-902180. (48 titles).

I. Bskyed-rim

1 Bla ma rgyud pa'i lo rgyus mu tig 'phreng ba
2 Chos spyod bag chags rang grol
3 Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang tshor ba rang grol
4 Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po
5 Klong bshags brjod pa rang grol

6 Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol
7 Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol
8 Zhi khro'i bsgom rim lhan skyes
9 Sbyin sreg 'phrin las rang grol gi sngon 'gro
10 Dngos gzhi (sbyin sreg 'phrin las rang grol)
11 Las byang 'phrin las lhun grub
12 Dbang gi sngon 'gro
13 Dbang bzhi phrad tshad rang grol gyi spros bcas bum dbang chen mo
14 Dbang gong ma gsum
15 Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan
16 Dbang bzhi phrad tshad rang grol gyi rjes kyi rim pa
17 Tshe 'das dbang bskur gnas spor 'gro drug rang grol

II. Rdzogs-rim skor

18 Sa bcad lde mig rang grol—Nyi zla 'od zer
19 Zhi khro'i gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spang rang grol
20 Gsol 'debs sku gsum klong yangs
21 Sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dus byed

III. Khrid

A. Khrid dngos-gzhi

22 Skye gnas bar do'i khrid yig kun gzhi rang grol
23 Rmi lam bar do'i khrid yig 'khrul pa rang grol
24 Bsam gtan bar do'i khrid yig rig pa rang grol
25 'Chi kha bar do'i khrid yig dran pa rang grol
26 Chos nyid bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol
27 Srid pa bar do'i khrid yig srid pa rang grol
28 Bar do drug gi rgyab chos rnams

B. Khrid ngo-sprod-kyi skor

29 Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol
30 Thod rgal ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol
31 Sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol
32 Sku gsum ngo sprod
33 Kham sa'i mi mo la brten nas rnam shes 'byung 'jug gnas gsum du ngo sprod
34 A ma mdo le ma'i gtam rgyud
35 Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa srid pa rang grol
36 Chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo
37 Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo
38 Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyob ma
39 'Phrang sgrol gyi smon lam
40 Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig smon lam
41 'Chi ba brtag thabs mtshan ma rang grol
42 'Chi bslu
43 Ma bsgom sangs rgyas kyi gdams pa btag grol phung po rang grol
44 Btags grol gyi don bsdus btags grol bcang thabs
45 'Og sgo bde ba chen po 'dod chags rang grol gyi khrid
46 De'i nyams khrid zur du bkol ba—Nyi zla 'od zer
47 Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol
48 Sbyin sreg gi rim pa las bzhi so so'i yig chung—Rgya ston

ZH: *Kar-gling zhi-khro'i 'don-cha.* Delhi, 1994. Reproduced from a print made from xylographs carved at Zhe-chen monastery in eastern Tibet. Arranged according to the teaching lineage of Mkhas-grub 'Gyur-med-mthu-stobs-rnam-rgyal (1710-1769). LC Acquisition Project 2. (29 titles, 279 folios, 557 pages).

1	Gsangs sngags rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol (1-16)
2	Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol (17-21)
3	Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol (23-25)
4	Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol (33-130)
5	Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po (135-161)
6	Dzapra [Japra] dgongs bzlas tshad rang grol (165-188)
7	Las bum sgrub pa'i cho ga dag byed chu rgyun (193-197)
8	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba (201-209)
9	Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol (215-223)
10	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa (227-263)
11	Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (267-289)
12	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (297-332)
13	Nyams chags sdig sgrib thams cad bshags pa'i rgyal po na rag dong sprug(s) (333-353)
14	Mjug tu mar me'i smon lam (353-355)
15	Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag (357-388)
16	Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam (389-400)
17	Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig (389-400)
18	Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam (389-400)
19	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma (389-400)
20	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol (401-459)
21	Gshin po rjes 'dzin gnas 'dren bsdus pa (463-482)
—	[Gnas lung gi lag len] (483-500)
22	Yig brgya ka˙ ka ni sogs brjod pa—Stag bla ma ti [=Padma mati] (501-502)
23	'Dod yon bsngo ba—Guru Chos kyi dbang phyug (503)
24	'Dod yon 'bul tshig—Gter chen 'Gyur med rdo rje [=Gter bdag gling pa] (505-506)
25	Rdzogs pa rang byung gi rgyud le'u lnga pa las: Zas gtad bsdus pa (507-508)
—	[Gnas lung gi lag len] (509)
26	Smon lam rdo rje'i rgya mdud (511-512)
27	Dbang bsdus (513-534)
28	Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi rjes kyi rim pa gsal ba'i me tog (545-550)
29	Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan (551-553)

Appendix 4:
Catalogue of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro*

NOTE: The following catalogue is a comprehensive listing of titles found in all known editions of the Kar-gling *Zhi-khro* anthology. It is arranged alphabetically according to the Tibetan system with each entry numbered consecutively. A provisional English translation is added under each Tibetan title, followed by the names of compositors, dates and location (if known), a genre classification label (see Chapter 2), abbreviations and folia citations, colophon information (if applicable), and references to western-language translations. Variations of numbered titles are also listed alphabetically and cross-referenced in the following form, "[=text#]". The information contained herein is contingent and subject to revision. My main intention in compiling this exhaustive list was to provide some basic materials upon which further research could continue. It is my hope that interested scholars may find it useful.

ENTRY NO.	001
TITLE	Kar gling zhi khro'i gnas 'dren gyi mtshams sbyor snying por dril ba Abbreviated essential connecting links in the [ritual of] guidance [to a higher] state from the kar gling peaceful and wrathful deities
AUTHOR(s)	Kun bzang gzhan phan mtha' yas [b. 1800]
SUBJECT	gnas 'dren
REFERENCE	CH (561-610), NE (5 f6p)
COLOPHON	(NE) zhes pa'ang btsun pa Bzhan phan mtha' yas pas rang dang na mnyam gyi grong chog mkhan po rnams la phan sems gyis bris pa dge

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ENTRY NO.	002
TITLE	Karma gling pa'i na rag dong sprugs lugs kyi mtshams sbyor Connecting links [in the ritual] of the tradition of Karma gling pa's "dredging the depths of hell"
AUTHOR(s)	Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678)
SUBJECT	dong sprugs
REFERENCE	GK (297-304)

ENTRY NO.	003
TITLE	Karma gling pa'i zhi khro'i dbyangs gdongs gzur mang lugs phyog gcig tu bkod pa bzhugs pa'i dbu'o

	Simplified arrangement of melodies for karma gling pa's peaceful and wrathful deities [according to] the zur mang tradition
SUBJECT	bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE	BL 2085 (9f)

ENTRY NO.	004
TITLE	Karma chags med rtsa tho chen mo'i bsdus don rang gi nyams len khyer bde gung du bkol ba Separately engaging bliss and bringing it into one's own practice: a synopsis of karma chagme's great list of the main points of "the profound doctrine of the self-liberated wisdom of the peaceful and wrathful deities"
AUTHOR(s)	Padma bdud 'dul (1816-1872)
DATE/PLACE	lcags bya lo [=1861]; Sga rje khams bzhung dgon
SUBJECT	thabs lam
REFERENCE	GK (1063-1074)
COLOPHON	(GK-1074.5-7) khyad par bla ma Karma chos bying dbang phyugs kyi bka' dri ma med pa yi ge'i lam la phan sems bzang pos khams smyon Padma bdud 'dul gyis gang dran ngar mor bris pa / sprul sku Nor bzang gyi[s] brje tho tsam lcags byar zla tshes la sga rje khams bzhung dgon gnas spel

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ENTRY NO.	005
TITLE	Kun tu bzang po'i smon lam Prayer to kuntu zangpo
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem phrul can (1337-1408)
SUBJECT	smon lam
REFERENCE	B2 (135b.2-138a.5)
COLOPHON	(B2-138a.4-5) rdzogs pa chen po kun tu bzang po'i dgongs pa zang thal du bstan pa'i rgyud las // smon lam stobs po che btab pas sems can thams cad sangs mi rgya ba'i dbang med par bstan pa'i le'u dgu pa khol du phyungs pa'o

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ENTRY NO.	006
TITLE	Kun bzang dgongs pa kun 'dus las zhi khro'i bdag dbang Peaceful and wrathful self-initiation from "the embodiment of all of kunzang's realization"
SUBJECT	bdag dbang
REFERENCE	T5 (1f), T8v1 (251-252)
COLOPHON	(T5) bdag gi gnas gsum du bstim mo : de nas rdo rje sems dpa' ru wal gyis bskyed pa ni bdag nyid dbang ldan rgyal por 'gyur ro : sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	007
TITLE	Dkar chag Table of contents
SUBJECT	dkar chag
REFERENCE	PLKC (3f)

ENTRY NO.	008
TITLE	Dkyil 'khor rnam dag mthong ba rang grol Completely pure mandala of "the self-liberated vision"
SUBJECT	dbang
REFERENCE	DJTY

ENTRY NO. 009
TITLE Bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba
Minor practice manual of "the self-liberation of enemies, obstructing demons, and poison: the assembly of all the dharma protectors of the seven classes of oath-bound protectors"
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT bstan srung
REFERENCE CH (315-326), DJTY, DLSY, GK (313-323), NE (4f, 7p), PLKC (3f), PY (203-212), S3 (5f), T5 (6f), T6 (218-225), T7v3 (483-490), T8v1 (253-262), TLSY, ZH (201-209)
COLOPHON (CH-326.2-4; NE; T6-225.4-6) zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi las byang chung ba nyung bsdus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol zhes bya ba rdzogs so : 'di bris dge bas sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa phyogs dus gnas skabs thams cad zhing du dar rgyas la yun ring dug nas par gyur cig
(PY-212.5-6; T5; T8v1-261.6-262.1) zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi las byang chung ba nyung bsdus dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol zhes bya ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos sbyar ba'o
(S3) zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las : bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi : phrin las chos skyong kun 'dus pa'i : dgra bgegs gdug pa rang grol gyi : las byang chung ba aṭhi : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 010
TITLE Bka' srung dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi bskang gdug pa rang grol
Self-liberation of poison: [prayers of] expiation to the assembly of all the dharma protectors of the seven classes of oath-bound protectors
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE lug lo, dog month [?]; Dpal Rin chen gling
SUBJECT bstan srung
REFERENCE CH (513-526), DJTY, DLSY, GK (609-618), NE (5f, 9p), PLKC (3f), PY (541-551), T5 (6f), T6 (332-345), T7v3 (491-498), T8v1 (379-388), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (215-223)
COLOPHON (CH-525.2-3; NE; PY-550.4-6; T7v3-498.1-3; T5; T8v1-387.6-388.1-2) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyi cha lag / mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol zhes bya ba 'di nyid lug lo khyi zla ba'i yar tshes bzang po la / Nam(ṃ) mkha('ṃ) rgya(ṃ) mtshos(ṃ) [absent, CH, NE] dpal rin chen gling du bris pas 'gro ba sems can thams cad kyis zab chos 'di nyid la long spyod nas / mthar thugs sku gsum lhun kyi 'byas bu 'thob par gyur cig / sarvamaṅgalaṃ
(ZH-223.2-4) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi bka' srung : dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdangs skong gdug pa rang grol rdzogs so : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : zhes bya ba di nyid lug lo khyi yi zla ba'i yar tshes bzang po la rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho'i dpal rin chos gling du bris pas 'gro ba sems can thams cad kyi zab chos 'di nyid la longs spyod nas mthar thug sku gsum lhun grub kyi 'bras bu thob bar gyur cig / maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 011
TITLE Bka' srung sde bdun mchod mdor bsdus pa
Digest of offerings to the seven classes of oath-bound protectors
SUBJECT bstan srung
REFERENCE B3 (277-279), B5 (2f, 3p), DLSY, T8v1 (263-264), ZH (225-226)

ENTRY NO.	012
TITLE	Sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs dug gsum ma spangs rang grol Self-liberation without abandoning the three poisons: a guru yoga supplication to the three embodiments
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE	Sgam po gdar ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT	gsol 'debs (DJTY, TLSY, ZDTY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	B1a (2f), B2 (14b.4-15b.2), B3 (1-2), B5 (2f), CH (457-460), DH (1-5), DJTY, DLSY, GK (49-52), KS (1-3), NE (2f), PY (29-31), S1 (1-5), S3 (2f, 3p), T5 (3f, 5p), T6 (37-40), T7v2 (273-276), T8v1 (29-33), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (23-25)
COLOPHON	(B1a-7.3-5; B3-2.4-6; GK-52.5-6; KS-3.13-18; PY-31.3-4; S1-5.4-6; T5; T8v1-32.6-33.2; ZH-25.2-4) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi : sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs : dug gsum ma spang rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba : ji srid 'khor ba'i 'jig rten ma stong bar : de srid dam chos 'di ni ma rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas sgom po gdar gyi ri bo lhan bran gar byed pa 'dra ba nas gdan drangs pa'o (B5; S3) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi : sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs : dug gsum ma spang rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba : ji srid 'khor ba'i 'jig rten ma stong bar : de srid dam chos 'di ni ma rdzogs so // Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o (CH-460.1-2; NE; T6-40.6-7) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi : sku gsum bla ma'i rnal 'byor gyi gsol 'debs : dug gsum ma spang rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba : ji srid 'khor ba'i 'jig rten ma stong bar : de srid dam chos 'di ni ma rdzogs so
TRANSLATION	Thurman 1994: 99-104; Wallace 1998: 305-307

ENTRY NO.	013
TITLE	Sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol Self-liberation of the vast expanse, supplication to the three embodiments
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	gsol 'debs (DJTY, TLSY, ZDTY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	CH (75-82), DJTY, DLSY, GK (35-42), NE (3f), PLKC, PY (23-28), T5 (4f), T6 (29-35), T7v2 (267-272), T8v1 (21-28), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (17-21)
COLOPHON	(CH-81.5-82.2) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi : sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol zhes bya ba : ji srid 'khor ba'i 'jig rten ma stongs bar : de srid zab chos 'di yang ma rdzogs shog : 'di byes gong ba sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa phyogs dus gnas skabs thams cad du dar zhing rgyas la yun rings su gnas par gyur cig (GK-42.2; T5; T7v2-272.5; T8v1-28.3) Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o (T6-35.4-5) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi : sku gsum gsol 'debs klong yangs rang grol zhes bya ba : ji srid 'khor ba'i 'jig rten ma stongs bar : de srid zab chos 'di yang ma rdzogs so : Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o (ZH-21.4-5) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi gsol 'debs sku gsum klong yangs rang srol [sic] zhes bya ba : O rgyan kyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba : 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du ma rdzogs so : Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998, 299-303

ENTRY NO.	014
TITLE	Skong chen bzhi pa Fourth great expiation [ritual]
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT	bskang bshags (TLSY=dbang sgrub)

REFERENCE	TLSY

ENTRY NO.	015
TITLE	Skong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi dbang bskur gnas spar 'gro drug rang grol Self-liberation of the six [classes of] beings, raising [them to a higher] state: an initiation of "the self-liberation of broken vows through expiation and confession"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	bskang bshags (DJTY=dbang; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub; ZDTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (10f), T7v1 (127-160), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v1-160.1) Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

ENTRY NO.	[=020]
TITLE	Bskang ba nyams chags rang grol gyi bskyed rim sngon 'gro'i lhan thabs Supplement to the preliminary [practices of] the generation stage of "the self-liberation of broken vows through expiation"
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE	Mda' Rin chen gling
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs (DJTY=bskyed rim; DLSY, TLSY [?]=dbang)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY [?], PY (39-59), T5 (10f, 19p), TLSY [?], T8v1 (35-56)

ENTRY NO.	016
TITLE	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol Self-liberation of broken vows through expiation and confession
SUBJECT	bskang bshags
REFERENCE	ZDTY

ENTRY NO.	017
TITLE	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi sngon 'gro lhan thabs Supplement to the preliminary [practices] of "the self-liberation of broken vows through expiation and confession"
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE	Gang phu'i mda' Rin chen gling
SUBJECT	bskang bshags (DJTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, GK (53-72), T7v1 (217-232)
COLOPHON	(GK-71.6-72.1; T7v1-232.5) gang phu'i mda' rin chen gling du Rgya btsun Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho'i sbyar ba'o

ENTRY NO.	018
TITLE	Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol Self-liberation of the six [classes of] beings, guiding the deceased [to a higher] state: an auxiliary [practice] of "the self-liberation of broken vows through expiation and confession"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Padma'i rigs sngags 'dzin pa [=Padma rig 'dzin, 1625-1697 ?]
DATE/PLACE	Dwags lha sgam po
SUBJECT	bskang bshags

REFERENCE CH (527-536), GK (733-837), NE (20f, 39p), T5 (47f), T7v2 (1-52), T8v2 (69-169), ZH (401-459)

COLOPHON (GK-837.6) Padma'i rigs sngags 'dzin pas sbyar ba lags so dge'o
(NE; T5; T7v2-51.5-52.2; T8v2-169.3-6; ZH-459.3-6) zab chos dgongs pa rang grol gyi : cha rkyen bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol las : tshe 'das bar do'i rnam shes drangs ba'i phyir : gnas spar 'gro drug rang grol 'di sbyar de : samayā : zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi cha lag : rigs drug gnas 'dren gyi lung : 'gro drug rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba'o : 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : skal ldan las can shes rab snying rje can dang 'phrad bar shog : samayā : rgya rgya rgya : gter rgya : Karma gling pas dwags lha sgom bo nas spyan drangs pa'i zab chos lags so

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ENTRY NO. 019

TITLE Bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa
Stages of mending the vows from "the self-liberation of broken vows through expiation and confession"

AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)

DATE/PLACE khyi lo, beginning of the 4th month; dpal Chos 'khor rtse

SUBJECT bskang bshags (DJTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub)

REFERENCE CH (461-512), DJTY, DLSY, GK (499-501, 551-594), NE (14f), PLKC (8f), PY (487-514, 525-540), S3 (18f), T5 (24f), T6 (295-332), T7v1 (431-465), T8v1 (329-376), TLSY, ZH (227-263)

COLOPHON (CH-512.3-4; GK-501.4-6; NE; PY-540.3-6; S3; T5; T6-345.1-3; T8v1-376.4-6; ZH-263.4-6) bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa 'di nyid / O rgyan Padma 'byung gnas kyis zhi khro'i mdangs bskang mdzad pa la brten nas / rang 'dra blo dman rnams kyis don du / 'grigs chags su bkod pa 'di / khyi lo zla ba bzhi pa'i yar tshes la / Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos dpal chos 'khor rtse tu bris pa'i dge bas sems can thams cad 'khor ba ngan song gi sdug bsngal las grol bar gyur cig / maṅgalaṃ
(T7v1-465.2-4) bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi thugs dam bskang ba'i rim pa 'di nyid dar rgyas blo dman rnams kyi don du / 'grigs chags su bkod pa 'di / Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos / dpal chos 'khor rtse tu bris pa'o / dge ba'i sems can thams cad 'khor ba ngan song gi sdug bsngal las grol bar gyur cig / sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 020

TITLE Bskyed rim sngon 'gro lhan thabs
Supplement to the preliminary [practices of] the generation stage

AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)

DATE/PLACE Mda' Rin chen gling

SUBJECT sgrub thabs (DJTY=bskyed rim; DLSY, TLSY [?]=dbang)

REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY [?], PY (39-59), T5 (10f, 19p), TLSY [?], T8v1 (35-56)

COLOPHON (PY-59.2-3; T5; T6-60.2-3; T8v1-56.4-5) bskyed rim sngon 'gro lhan thabs bsdus pa 'di nyid gtam myog rgya grong gi g.yas zur gangs phu'i mda' rin chen gling du Rgya btsun Nam mkha('i) chos kyi rgya mtshos bris pa dge'o / maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 021

TITLE Bskyed rim lhan thabs 'dzab dgongs grags stong tshangs dbyangs bzlas rang grol
Self-liberation [through] recitation of the sound-emptiness brahma melody, the intent of recitation: a suplemental [practice of] the generation stage

AUTHOR(s) Sngags 'chang chos 'byung [=He pa chos 'byung ?]

DATE/PLACE	He brag dkar
SUBJECT	bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE	T5 (10f, 19p), T8v1 (213-229)
COLOPHON	(T5; T8v1-229.1-3) zhes pa 'di ni brgya stong khri 'bum sogs grangs thems pa dang / kha ba sgyur / bstod bskul la sogs pa rnams 'phrul shes par bya'o / spyir 'dzab kyi rnam bshad zhib rgyas dgongs 'dus pa sogs gzhan du ltos / zhi khro'i las byang la nyer mkho 'di ni man ngag bskyed rdzogs kyi lag len dang gter chos 'ga' zhig la phyogs tsam blo sbyangs pa'i Sngags 'chang chos 'byung gis he brag dkar gyi dben gnas su sbyar ba re zhig dge'o / sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	[=022]
TITLE	Khro ba'i bar do ngo sprod chos nyid thos grol chen mo Great liberation upon hearing of reality: a direct introduction to the bardo of wrathful deities
SUBJECT	ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE	BL 684 (18f)

ENTRY NO.	022
TITLE	Khro bo'i bar do 'char tshul bstan pa Presentation of how the bardo of the wrathful [deities] manifests
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]; requested by Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430); Dil mgo Mkhyen rtse Rin po che (1910-1991); requested by Kun bzang rgya mtsho; printing sponsored by the Do lung spyi dpon; Jo bo Tshe dbang dar rgyas and Nor bu dar rgyas
DATE/PLACE	Chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram, Sgam po brdar gyi ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs, thos grol
REFERENCE	B1 (21f, 41p), B1a (81-121), B2 (62b.5-74a.4), B4 (21f, 41p), BL 684 (18f), CM, DH (131-171), JVM, KS (43.7-69), S1 (32b.4-50a.2), T3 (no2), T7v3 (87.4-114), WadB 87a (33f)
COLOPHON	(B1; B1a-121.2-5; B4; DH-171.2-5; T3) bar do'i gdams pa thos pa tsam gyis grol ba : btas pa tsam gyis grol ba : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya ba chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod rdzogs so :: Grub thob Nyi zla sangs rgyas kyi sras kyi thu bo : Grub thob Karma gling pas chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram : sgam po brdar gyi ri lha bran gar byed pa 'dra ba'i gnas nas gsang ste dgan drangs pa'o : des sras Chos rje gling pa la bka' dang lung gtad / de'i Guru Suryacandra la rim par bka' dang lung babs pa lags so // de'i drung du bdag Ghagha Dharmasamudras gus par zhus so (B2-74a.3-4) bar do'i gdams pa thos pa tsam gyis grol ba btas pa tsam gyis grol ba : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya ba chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram : sgam po brdar gyi ri lha bran gar byed pa 'dra ba'i gnas nas gsang ste dgan drangs pa'o (BL 684-18r.1-5) sgrub chen [Nyi] zla sang rgyas gyis sras sgrub thob Karma gling pas chu bo ser ldan gyi 'gram / sgam po brdar gyi ri bo nas / ri lha phran gar byed pa 'dra ba'i gter nas gsangs te gdan drangs pa'i [?] sras Chos rje gling pa bka' dang lung gtad / des Ghu ru Sur ya tsan tra la rim par bka' dang lung babs pa lags so / Jo bo tshe dbang dar rgyas gyis chags dpe 'di / Nor bu dar rgyas bdag gis mgyogs par bris par dge'o // 'di bris dge bas pha mar gyur pa'i sems can thams cad sangs [?] thob par shog / dge'o // bkra shis so // (KS-4-5; S1-51a.6) namo guru śānta krodha maṇḍala bhyaḥ rab 'byams dkyil 'khor rgya mtsho'i rigs brgya'i bdag / zhi khro'i dkyil 'khor sgrub pa'i zab chos mchog / 'brel tshad don ldan sangs rgyas padma'i gsungs / Grub thob Karma gling pas spyan drangs pa'i / zab chos thos pas grol ster rdo rje'i tshig / sngag ban Kun bzang rgya mtshos dge bskul gyis / sbyin po'i bdag po Do lung spyi dpon nas / bsam sbyor dag pas par gyi

	gleg bam bskrun / dge ba 'di dang dus gsum rnam dkar mthus / Bstan 'dzin zhabs brtan bstan gshed ming mthar byas / rgyal bstan dar zhing skye 'gro'i bsde skyid 'phel / mar gyur 'gro kun mngon sangs rgyas gyur bsngo / ces rnam dkar sgrub pa pos rten bcas bskul ngor Mkhyen sprul Maṅgala Śribhutis bris pa dge (WadB 87a-33a) Sgrubs chen Nyi zla sangs rgyas kyi sras kyi mthu bos // Grub Karma gling pas // chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram // rgam po dar gyi ri bo nas // ri lha bran gar byed pa 'dra ba'i // gter nas gsang te gdan drangs pa'o // [de'i sras Chos rje gling pa la bka' dang lung btad do // des Guru Suryacandraraṣmi la bka' babs pa lags so // de'i drung du bdag Rgam po Dharmasamutras gus par zhus pa'o // 'di bris dge bas 'gro kun bar do'i 'jigs pa mi 'byung shog
TRANSLATION	Evans-Wentz 1960: 131-151; Tucci 1972: 129-149; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 57-71; Dargyay 1991: 117-134; Thurman 1994: 149-166; Prats 1996: 66-84

ENTRY NO.	023
TITLE	Glegs bam bzhugs byang dkar chag Volume index-catalogue
AUTHOR(s)	Bdud 'joms 'jigs bral ye shes rdo rje (1904-1987) [?]
SUBJECT	dkar chag
REFERENCE	T7v1 (493-499)

ENTRY NO.	024
TITLE	Sgom rim lhan skyes ye shes Stages of cultivating the coemergent pristine wisdom
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678) [?]
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs (DJTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, GK (679-696), T5 (8f), T7v1 (353-367), T8v1 (177-192)
COLOPHON	(GK-696.5; T7v1-367.2-3) Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o : 'di nyid bstan pa dang sems can thams cad la phan thogs par gyur cig : bkra shis (T5) Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

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ENTRY NO.	025
TITLE	Rgyas pa'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i dpe'u ris Diagrams for chanting separately the increase burnt offering
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg (DJTY=dbang, bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, PLKC (2f), T7v1 (505-506)

ENTRY NO.	026
TITLE	Rgyas pa'i sbyin sreg gud du bstan pa'i yig chung Short notes for presenting separately the increase burnt offering
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg (DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	DLSY, PLKC (6f), T7v2 (73-94)

ENTRY NO.	027
TITLE	Sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag Self-liberated cognizant awareness, a direct introduction to the six lamps: an auxiliary [practice] of "the great liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (6f), T7v3 (1-20), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON (T7v3-20.4) de ltar sgron ma drug dang dgu'i dbye ba rdzogs pa chen po'i dgongs pa'i bcud bsdus pa : shes rig rang grol ces bya ba : snyigs ma'i skal ldan las 'phrad can theg mchog ati la mos pa'i gang zag gi don du : sgron ma'i rnams par dbye ba bstan : 'dis kyang 'gro kun gsum mngon gyur shog : sgron ma drug gi ngo sprod shes rig rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba la stongs kyi bar du la rdzogs so : samaya : Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

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ENTRY NO. 028
TITLE Brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag
Self-liberation of transgressions and obscurations, one hundred prostrations: an auxiliary [practice] of "the great liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
SUBJECT bskang bshags (DJTY, ZDTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE B1a (319-348), B2 (22b.4-30b.2), B5 (12f), CH (329-360), DH (563-592), DJTY, DLSY, GK (343-369), JVM, KS (131-146), NE (10f), PLKC (6f), PY (229-252), RB (18f), S1 (254-281), S3 (12f, 23p), T5 (13f), T6 (227-252.3), T7v1 (369-390), T8v2 (39-62), ZDTY, ZH (267-289)
COLOPHON (B1a-346.3-347.3; B5; CH-359.5-360.4; DH-590.3-591.3; GK-368.3-6; KS-145.19-146.10; NE; PY-251.6-252.4; S1-280.5-281.6; S3; T5; T6-251.5-252.3; T7v1-390.1-5; T8v2-61.6-62.5; ZH-288.4-289.4) zhes pa mal 'byor mched lcam du yod kun : gcer bur phyungs te rkyang phyag gus pas 'tshal : ngag gis tshig dbyangs snyan pos bstod byas nas : yid kyis dus gsum bsags pa'i sdig sgrib rnams : gnong 'gyod tshul gyis brga phyag gus bar 'tshal : zhi khro'i lha phyag brgya dang bcur longs pa'i : sgrib sbyongs khyang 'phags sdig sgrib rang grol 'di : na rag bskang bshags la sogs gang byed kyang : 'di bzhin byas pa'i bsod nams tshad las 'das : de phyir brgya phyag 'di la rab tu 'bad : zhi khro dam pa rigs brgya'i brgya phyag sdig sgrib rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : bar do thos grol gyi cha lag : na rag bskang bshags kyi cha rkyen : zhi khro las byang gsum gyi don 'dus : shin tu zab par bstan pa 'di ni : kun la spel zhing dus gsum ma chag par brtson par gyis shig : samaya : Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o
TRANSLATION Tucci 1972: 189-205

ENTRY NO. [=157]
TITLE Brgya phyag bsdus pa
Digest of the one hundred prostrations
AUTHOR(s) Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT bskang bshags
REFERENCE NE (3f, 5p)

ENTRY NO. 029
TITLE Brgyud pa'i lo rgyus mdor bsdus nor bu'i phreng ba
Garland of jewels: an abridged transmission history [of "the profound doctrine of the self-liberated wisdom mind of the peaceful and wrathful deities"]
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430); requested by Bla ma Chos rgyal of Mdo khams; inscribed by Ban chung Bsod nams rgya mtsho
DATE/PLACE sa lug lo, 7th month, 10th day [="old" *phug-pa* Thursday July 16, 1499]; Rin chen gling
SUBJECT lo rgyus

REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, T7v1 (27-48), TLSY, ZDTY [=mu tig 'phreng ba ?]

COLOPHON <u>(T7v1-47b.1-4)</u> de ltar brgyud pa'i rim pa zur tsam 'di / mdo khams kyi bshes gnyen dam pa Bla ma Chos rgyal gyis yang yang bskul nas / rang 'dra blo dman rnams yid ches pa'i phyir / sa lug lo zla ba bdun pa'i yar tshes bcu la / gtam myong rgya grong gi g.yas zur gangs phu'i 'dab / chu bo gser ldan lo hi ta'i g.yas phyogs / dpal rin chen gling du Rgya btsun Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bkod pa / yi ge pa ni lho rgyud kyi ban chung Bsod nams rgya mtsho bris pa'o / dge ba yis mtshon nas sems can thams cad 'khor ba dang ngan song gi sdug bsngal gyi rgya mtsho chen po las myur du grol nas rnam mkhyen rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas thob pa'i rgyu ru smon // sarvamaṅgalaṃ

TRANSLATION Cuevas (Appendix 1)

ENTRY NO. 030

TITLE Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs
Lineage supplications

AUTHOR(s) Rig 'dzin Nyi ma grags (1647-1710); Padma mati (1591-1637); requested by O rgyan blo gros

DATE/PLACE Bdud 'dul sngags pa gling; Dben gnas sku lha dkar po

SUBJECT gsol 'debs

REFERENCE B1 (6f), B2 (15b.2-16b.2), B4 (6f), B5 (2f), BL 3443 (6f), CH (747-750), BL 3282 (6f), CM, DH (455-466), GK (27-32), JVM, S3 (1f), T3 (5f, 9p), T6 (1-8)

COLOPHON <u>(B1; B4; BL 3282-6a.5-6b.2; DH-465.5-466.2; T3)</u> gsol 'debs kyi rim pa 'di sprul pa'i gter ston Rigs 'dzin Nyi ma grags pas bdud 'dul sngags pa gling du sbyar ba 'di yang zad mi shes pa gang gā'i rgyun ltar yun ring gnas par gyur cig // sarvamaṅgalaṃ
<u>(GK-32.5-6)</u> zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs nges don rang grol zhes bya ba 'di yang / kho bo Padma matis dben gnas sku lha dkar po / rang nyid kyis blob ma O rgyan blo gros kyis bskul ngor sbyar ba dge'o

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ENTRY NO. [=030]

TITLE Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs nges don rang grol
Self-liberated true meaning: lineage supplications

AUTHOR(s) Padma mati (1591-1637); requested by O rgyan blo gros

DATE/PLACE Dben gnas sku lha dkar po

SUBJECT gsol 'debs

REFERENCE B5 (2f), GK (27-32)

ENTRY NO. [=030]

TITLE Brgyud pa'i gsol 'debs bdud rtsi'i char rgyun
Rain of nectar: lineage supplications

SUBJECT gsol 'debs

REFERENCE T6 (1-8)

ENTRY NO. 031

TITLE 'Gyod tshangs rgyal po'i byung khungs lo rgyus dang bcas
Story describing the occasion of the king's remorse

SUBJECT lo rgyus

REFERENCE DJTY, T7v1 (7-13)

ENTRY NO. [=147]

TITLE Bsgom rim lhan skyes rang grol
Stages of cultivating the self-liberated coemergent [pristine wisdom]

SUBJECT sgrub thabs (ZDTY=bskyed rim)

REFERENCE T5 (1f), ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 032 [appended to 048]
TITLE Ngan song thams cad yongs su sbyongs ba'i gzung
Dhāraṇi that thoroughly purifies all lower rebirths
AUTHOR(s) Mkhyen sprul maṅgala śri buti [?]; requested by Rnam dkar sgrub pa po
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE S1 (104.2-106)
COLOPHON (S1-106.6) Rnam dkar sgrub pa pos rtan bcas bskul ngor mkhyen sprul Maṅgala śri butis bris pa dge

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ENTRY NO. 033
TITLE Ngo sprod thams cad kyi sngon 'gro dur khrod bam ro bskyal ba la brten nas mi rtag pa'i bskul bar ngo sprod pa
Direct introduction to impermanence that [serves] as an exhortation based on [the experience of] carrying a human corpse to a cemetery: the preliminary [practice] of every direct introduction
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE lug lo, 6th month, 7th day; Sman mo dgon
SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (4f), T7v2 (433-442), TLSY
COLOPHON (T7v2-442.5-6) dur khrod ngo sprod kyi yig chung 'di nyid lug lo zla ba drug pa'i nyer bdun la sman mo yang dben nas Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bris pa'i dge bas sems can thams cad kyis dams pa'i chos rgyud 'dzin gus par gyur cig

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ENTRY NO. 034
TITLE Ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi dpe ris
Diagrams for "the self-liberated vision: a direct introduction"
SUBJECT ngo sprod
REFERENCE PLKC (8f)

ENTRY NO. 035
TITLE Ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi mar me ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs
Supplement to the direct introduction to the butter lamp of "the self-liberated vision: a direct introduction"
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (2f), T7v3 (37-40), TLSY
COLOPHON (T7v3-40.5-6) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las / ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol kyi mar me ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs 'di ni / Rgya btsun Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bris ba'i dge ba'ang / sems can thams cad rang snang chos nyid kyi dkyil 'khor du ngo shes bar gyis shig

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ENTRY NO. 036
TITLE Ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi gzhi'i 'od gsal ngo sprod kyis lhan thabs
Supplement to the direct introduction to the fundamental clear light of "the self-liberated vision: a direct introduction"
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
DATE/PLACE lug lo, 6th month, 27th day; Bkra shis sman mo'i yang dben
SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (6f), T7v3 (29-36), TLSY, WadB 84g (5f)

COLOPHON (T7v3-36.3-5) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi / 'od gsal dang po'i ngo sprod kyis lhan thabs 'de ni / lug lo zla ba drug pa'i nyer bdun la bkra shis sman mo'i yang dben na / Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bris pa sems can thams cad kyi rang rig skye med kyis don rtogs par gyur cig / maṅgalam
(WadB 84g-5b) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las : ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi 'od gsal dang po'i ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs zhes bya'o :: samaya :: dge'o

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ENTRY NO. 037
TITLE Sngags bshags sdig sgrib rang grol
Self-liberation of transgressions and obscurations: mantra [recitation] and confession
SUBJECT bskang bshags
REFERENCE T8v2 (63-67)

ENTRY NO. [=039]
TITLE Sngon 'gro thun mong ma yin pa
Unique preliminary [rites]
SUBJECT rdzogs rim
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 038
TITLE Sngon 'gro thun mong ma yin pa'i khrid rim bzhi'i ngag 'don o rgyan chen po'i chos spyod nas gsung pa
Stages of instruction on the unique preliminary [rites]: a recitation liturgy taught in accordance with the religious liturgies of the great one from orgyen
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT rdzogs rim
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 039
TITLE Sngon 'gro thun mong ma yin pa rang rgyud sbyong bar byed pa'i khrid rim bzhi pa
Unique preliminaries: four stages of purifying one's own mind-stream
SUBJECT rdzogs rim
REFERENCE PLKC (6f)

ENTRY NO. 040
TITLE Sngon 'gro'i gser skyems
Preliminary [rite] of the golden oblation
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT bstan srung
REFERENCE DLSY, TLSY

ENTRY NO. 041
TITLE Dngos gzhi sbyin sreg 'phrin las rang grol
Self-liberated enlightened activities: the main practice of the burnt offering [ritual]
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub [?]; ZDTY=bskyed rim)

REFERENCE	DLSY, TLSY [?], ZDTY

ENTRY NO.	[=149]
TITLE	Bcu gsum pa tshogs kyi las rim nas bcu bzhi pa thugs dam bskul ba'i rim pa sogs Thirteenth [chapter on] the procedure of the accumulation [rite] and the fourteenth [chapter on] the invocation of vows, and so forth
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	GK (453-491), PY (351-356)

ENTRY NO.	042
TITLE	Cho ga thams cad kyi sngon du 'gro ba gzhi bdag dang bgegs la gtor ma 'bul thabs Method of offering torma to the local spirits and obstructing demons: preliminary [practices] for the entire ritual
AUTHOR(s)	Rig 'dzin Nyi ma grags (1647-1710)
DATE/PLACE	Gang ri ti se [=Kailash]
SUBJECT	gtor ma
REFERENCE	NE (3f)
COLOPHON	(NE) Rig 'dzin Nyi ma grags pas gangs ri sa rgyal po ti se nas gdan drangs pa'o : dge'o : maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	043
TITLE	Cho ga sdig sgrib rnam par sbyong ba Ritual to thoroughly purify transgressions and obscurations
AUTHOR(s)	Lo chen Dharma śrī; arranged by Rdo rje gzi brjid rtsal [='Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po, 1820-1892]
DATE/PLACE	shing mo bya lo, 10th month [=1705]
SUBJECT	bskang bshags
REFERENCE	B3 (189-276), B5 (58f)
COLOPHON	(B3-275.5-276.2; B5) 'dir bka' gter gyi cho ga phan tshun lto sbyar ba ni / snga 'gyur gyi shing rta chen po rnams kyis bka' mas gzhung bsrang / gter ma'i man ngag gis zur brgyan ces rlung ltar grags pa nyid phyag len du btab pa ste / bka' mo dong sprugs kyi cho ga'i khog phub kyis bcad gzhir bshag pa la / zab gter 'di nyid kyi rdo rje'i tshig gong 'og 'brel bsdebs te gyer sgom sgrags ma'i tshul du sbyar ba yin pa'i phyir ro / de tar zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi cho ga sdig sgrib rnam par sbyong ba zhes bya ba 'di ni mdo khams go 'jo bla ma Rnam grol bzang po dbon slob kyis bskul ba las / rje btsun bla ma dam pa Gter chen Chos kyi rgyal po'i bka' drin gyis 'tsho ba'i gnyos kyi dge slong rgan po Dharma śrīs gter byon gyi las byang chung bas gzhung bsrang ba las kha 'gengs dgos pa rnams las byang che ba sogs las kyang bskangs shing bdag 'jug dang bcas khyer bde bar shing mo bya lo ston zla smin drug zla ba'i yar ngo'i nyin bzhi la rdzogs par nyis bris spangs te sug bris su spel ba'o / 'dis kyang sems can thams cad sdig sgrib kyi 'ching ba las rnam par grol ba'i rgyur gyur cig / de ltar rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po'i lam las zung 'jug gi rtogs pa mthar son pa rmad du byung ba'i lo tsā ba g.yu sgra snying po'i rnam 'phrul gnas brtan chen po Dharma śrīs legs par stsal ba'i zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi las byang cha lag dang bcas snying por dril ba 'di nyid slar yang nyer mkho'i yan lag 'ga' zhig gis kyang brgyan te bklags pas grub par rig pa 'dzin pa rDo rje gzi brjid rtsal gyis bsdebs pa'o / de las byung ba'i legs byas snang ba yis / 'gro kun sgrib gnyis mun pa rab gsal nas / sku dang ye shes phrin las rmad byung ba'i / rnam grol thar pa'i grong du 'jug gyur cig

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ENTRY NO.	044 [appended 083]
TITLE	Chos sku kun bzang che mchog he ru ka (Bar do rnam pa drug gi rtsa tshig) Dharmakāya most supreme he ru ka (Root verses on the six bardos)
SUBJECT	ngo sprod
REFERENCE	BL 3313 (21f)

ENTRY NO.	[=010]
TITLE	Chos skyong kun 'dus dam can sde bdun gyi mdangs bskang gdug pa rang grol Self-liberation of poison: [prayers of] expiation to the lustrous assembly of the seven classes of oath-bound protectors
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE	lug lo, dog month [?]; dpal Rin chen gling
SUBJECT	bstan srung
REFERENCE	ZH (215-223)

ENTRY NO.	[=009]
TITLE	Chos skyong kun 'dus dam can sde bdun gyi las byang chung ba gdug pa rang grol Self-liberation of poison: a minor practice manual of the assembly of all the seven classes of oath-bound protectors
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT	bstan srung
REFERENCE	S3 (5f), ZH (201-209)

ENTRY NO.	045
TITLE	Chos rgyal gser gyi lag pa zhes bya ba'i phyag mar me phul ba'i lo rgyus smon lam dang bcas pa Hand of the golden dharma king: a history of the butter-lamp offering including prayers
SUBJECT	lo rgyus
REFERENCE	T6 (503-512)
COLOPHON	(T6-511.4-512.2) rgyal po gser gyi lag pa'i mar me'i lo rgyus lam dang bcas pa rdzogs so / bcom ldan ston pa mar me mdzad drung du / chos rgyal gser gyi lag pa zhes bya ba'i / khed kyi mtshan mchog rgyu rkyen gang yin zhus / sangs rgyas zhal nas rgyu rkyen lo rgyus gsung / rgyal ba'i bka' bzhin rgyal po'i thugs bskyed nas / rang gi lus la ras bal gyis sgrel zhing / til mar nang btsos snang gsal sgron me byas / byang chub mchog tu thugs bskyed smon lam btab / rigs drug so so'i sdug bsngal kun bsal nas / rang rang chos kyi snang ba gsal thob ste / 'bras bu sku gsum sa la bzhag ches grags / de 'dra'i snang gsal mchod pa'i yang rtse 'di / ltong gsum 'jig rten khams kun gsal ba dang / phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas byang sems kun mchod cing / ma gyur 'gro kun kun bzang klong grol shog / sangs rgyas mdzad pa khyad par 'phags pa / dad pa'i chos rgyal dka' spyad khyad du 'phags / bdag sogs 'gro ba'i smon lam byang 'phags gsum / gsum 'dzom khams gsum 'gro don spyod par shog

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ENTRY NO.	046
TITLE	Chos nyid bar do thod rgal gyi ngo sprod mthong bas rang grol Self-liberation through seeing: a direct introduction to the [practice of] direct transcendance [and] the bardo of reality
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT	ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)

REFERENCE DLSY, PLKC (14f), TLSY, ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 047

TITLE Chos nyid bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol gyi ngo sprod car phog khyer ba deb zhig
Book that yields an immediate direct introduction to "the self-liberated vision: a guidebook to the bardo of reality"

AUTHOR(s) Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678)

SUBJECT ngo sprod

REFERENCE B3 (147-187)

COLOPHON (B3-187.5-6) rdzogs chen la mos pa Rāgasyas 'gro don bsam pa bzang pos bris pa la nyes pa gang mchis bka' srung rnams la bzod par gsol / dge bas 'gro ba mang po grol bar gyur cig / bkra shis dpal 'bar 'jam gling rgyan du shog

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ENTRY NO. [=048]

TITLE Chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo
Great liberation upon hearing: a direct introduction to the bardo of reality

SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol

REFERENCE DLSY, TLSY, ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 048

TITLE Chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
Great liberation upon hearing: instructions for recollecting the bardo of reality

AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa

DATE/PLACE Chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram, Sgam po gdar ri bo, Dwags po

SUBJECT gsal 'debs, thos grol (DJTY, TLSY=ngo sprod; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)

REFERENCE B1 (36f, 71p), B1a (9-79), B2 (44b.1-62b.5), B4 (36f, 71p), BL 185 (79f), BL 684 (31f), BL 2185 (79f), BL 3270 (36f), BL 3315 (65f), BL 3315 (65f), BL 3432 (36f), CM, DH (59-129), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, KS (4-43.6), BL 684 (49f), PLKC (23f), RB (67f), S1 (6-104.2), SGA (5-44a), T3 (28f, 55p), T7v3 (41-114), TLSY, WadB 84c (49f), WadB 87 (57f), ZDTY

COLOPHON (B1; B2-62b.5; B1a-79.2-3; B4; DH-129.2-3; KS-43.5-6; T3) de yan chad ni 'chi kha'i bar do la 'od gsal ngo sprod pa dang : chos nyid zhi ba'i bar do ngo sprod pa thos grol chen mo thal lo

(BL 3315-64.3-65.3) 'di ni thos nas log lta ma skyes pa kho nas grol bar nus so : de'i phyir 'di la shin tu gces spras su bya'o : 'di ni chos thams cad kyi bcud yin no : bar do'i gdams pa : thos pa tsam kyis grol ba : bltas grol ba : gdams grol : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod rdzogs so :: Gter ston Karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas gter gnas gdan drangs pa'o ::: chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol 'di // Gzhan don dbang po zhes bya'i maṇi pas // chos 'khor lha sar mi zad spar du bsgrubs

(RB) 'di ni thos nas log lta ma skyes pa kho nas grol bar 'gyur ro : de'i phyir 'di la shin tu gces spras su bya'o : 'di ni chos thams cad kyi bcud bar do'i gdams pa : gdams grol : ltas grol : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya'o : chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas chu bo gser 'gram sgam po dar gyi ri bo nas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o : de'i sras Chos kyi gling pa la gnang : des bla ma Nyi ma'i 'od zer la : des Ku ma ra la : des Dkon mchog 'od zer la : des Lhan brtson 'grus bzang po la : Sangs rgyas dpal dang : Chos dpal gnyis la'o : des Rgyal mtshan bsod nams la : des Bla ma rin po che la : des Rin chen rgyal mtshan la : des Bsod nams 'od zer rgyal mtshan la : des Rin po che la : des sprul sku Shes rab ye shes bla ma rje la gnang : des bdag la gnang ba'o

(S1-103.6-104.2; T7v3-112.6-113.2) 'di ni thos nas log lta ma skyes pa kho nas grol bar 'gyur ro : de'i phyir 'di la shin tu gces spras su bya'o : 'di ni chos thams cad kyi bcud len no : bar do'i gdams pa thos pa tsam kyis grol ba bltas pa tsam kyis grol ba : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram : sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o : sarvamaṅgalam
(SGA) Grub thob Karma gling pas chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram : sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o
(WadB 84c-48b) Rigs 'dzin Karma gling pas : chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram gam po dar gyi ri nas gdan drangs pa'o :: samaya rgya rgya rgya : sarvamaṅgalam

TRANSLATION Evans-Wentz 1960: 83-131; Tucci 1972: 83-128; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 33-56; Dargyay 1991: 67-115; Thurman 1994: 117-148; Prats 1996: 31-66

ENTRY NO. [=048]
TITLE Chos nyid zhi ba'i bar do ngo sprod pa'i thos grol chen mo
Great liberation upon hearing: a direct introduction to the peaceful deities of the bardo of reality
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE BL 684 (31f)

ENTRY NO. 049
TITLE Chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag
Religious liturgy of the self-liberation of karmic latencies: an auxiliary [practice] of "the great liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
SUBJECT sgrub thabs (DJTY, ZDTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE B1 (26f, 51p), B1a (267-317), B2 (123b.3-134b.6), B4 (26f, 51p), BL 2199 (17f), BL 2686 (26f), BL 3286 (25f), BL 3314 (32f), BL 3314 (32f), BL 3447 (26f), CH (25-74), CM, DH (7-57), DJTY, DLSY, GK (195-227), JVM, KS (147-168), NE (17f, 33p), PLKC (9f), PY (305-338), RB (28f), S1 (173-211), S3 (16f, 31p), SGA (79-95a), T2 (33f, 65p), T3 (22f, 43p), T4 (5a.1-47a.2), T5 (21f, 41p), T6 (363-397), T7v1 (169-197.6), T8v2 (353-386), TLSY, WadB 84b (22f), ZDTY, ZH (357-388)
COLOPHON (B1; B1a-317.1-3; B4; DH-57.1-3; NE; T3; T6-397.2-5; WadB 84b-21b-22a) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod rab gsal : bar do thos grol gyi nyams len : zhi khro'i las byang tshor ba rang grol gsum gyi snying po bar do gsal ba [gsang dbang] rig pa rang grol gyis cha rkyen : bskong bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi dngos gzhi : skyes bu skal ldan rnams kyi thar lam : chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so :: samaya : rgya rgya rgya : ge'o
(B2-134b.4-6) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod rab gsal : bar do thos grol gyi nyams len : zhi khro'i las byang tshor ba rang grol gsum gyi snying po: bar do'i gsang dbang rig pa rang grol gyis cha rkyen : bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi dngos gzhi : skyes bu las ldan rnams kyis thar lam : chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o
(CH-74.2-3) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod rab gsal : bar do thos grol gyi nyams len : zhi khro'i las byang tshor ba rang grol gyi snying po : bar do gsang dbang rig pa rang grol gyi cha rkyen : bskang bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi dngos gzhi : skal ldan rnams kyi thar lam : chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : samaya : Grub thob Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o

(GK-227.2-4; PY-337.1-3; RB; T2; T5; T8v2-385.6-386.2) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod rab gsal : bar do thos grol gyi nyams len // zhi khro'i las byang tshor ba rang grol gyi snying po : bar do gsang [bdag -PY] dbang rig pa rang grol gyi cha rkyen : bskang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi dngos gzhi : skyes bu skal ldan rnams kyi thar lam : chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : Karma gling pa'i gter nas drangs pa'o
(BL 3314-31.5-34.6) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod rab gsal : bar do thos grol gyi nyams len // zhi khro'i las byang tshor ba rang grol gyi sku gsum gyi snying po bar do gsang ba reg pa rang grol gyis cha rkyen : bskong bshags nyams pa rang grol gyi dngos gzhi : skyes bu skal ldan rnams kyi thar lam : chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : zhi khro'i chos spyod bag chags rang grol 'di // sbyin bdag bla ma Gzhan don dbang po yis // chos 'khor lha sar mi zad spar du bsgrub // dge bas 'gro kun sangs rgyas thob par shog / sarvamaṅgalaṃ
(KS-168.8-10; S3) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du ma rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o : sarvamaṅgalaṃ
(SGA) Grub thob Kar ma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o / sngags ban khams gsum yongs grol gyi lha lung chos kyi sde ru par du bskrun / par 'di sho rong 'ja' sa'i khrid bsam gtan gling dgon du bzhugs
(ZH-288.2-4) zhi khro 'dus pa'i chos spyod rab gsal : bar do thos grol gyi nyams len : zhi khro las byang gsum gyi cha lag : tshor ba rang grol gyi snying po : bar do gsang dbang rig pa rang grol gyi cha rkyen : skong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi dngos gzhi : skal ldan rnams kyi thar lam : chos spyod bag chags rang grol zhes bya ba 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : Grub thob Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o

TRANSLATION: Thurman 1994, 205-225

ENTRY NO. 050
TITLE 'Chi ka'i gdams ngag
Oral instructions on dying
AUTHOR(s) Klong chen pa dri med 'od zer (1308-1363)
DATE/PLACE Kho thang rin chen gling
SUBJECT gdams ngag, thos grol
REFERENCE T8v2 (433-435)
COLOPHON (T8v2-435.1-4) rang bzhin rdzogs pa chen po'i rnal 'byor pa // kLong chen rab byams bzang pos legs par bkod // dge bas mkha' mnyam 'gro ba ma lus pa // gdod ma'i dbyings su mngon par sangs rgyas shog // 'chi ka ma la tshangs sprugs su gdab pa'i man ngag bla na med pa'i ngo sprod // rgyal sras Dri med 'od zer gyis / dad ldan gyi slob ma 'gas gsol ba btab pa'i ngor / kho thang rin chen gling gi dben gnas su bkod pa rdzogs so

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ENTRY NO. 051
TITLE 'Chi khar sangs rgyas pa khug pa lnga'i man ngag
Precepts on attaining buddhahood at the moment of death in five turns
SUBJECT man ngag, thos grol
REFERENCE RB (6f)
COLOPHON (RB) 'bring dbugs ma chad pa la khug pa lnga shes pas sangs rgyas so: tha ma ni skad cig ma gsum la sangs rgyas so: de ltar dbang po "bring po rnams kyis khugs pa lnga'i don shes pas: bar do med par yar gyi zang thal chen por sangs rgyas so: bkras shis dpal 'bar 'dzam gling rgyan du shog: mangga laṃ :

ENTRY NO. 052
TITLE 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol
Self-liberated omens and signs of death
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE B1 (25f, 49p), B1a (427-475), B4 (25f, 49p), BL 3278, BL 3440 (25f), CM, DH (323-371), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, KS (192.7-212), PLKC (8f), S1 (325-356), SGA (104-118a), T3 (19f, 37p), T7v3 (175-204), TLSY, ZDTY

COLOPHON (B1; B1a-474.4-475.2; B4; T3) e zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las : rang ngo thos grol chos kyi cha rkyen du : 'chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol 'di bstan pas : 'di bzhin rtogs shig phyi rabs mal 'byor rnams : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : skal ldan las can shes rab blo dang ldan : dad brtson snying rje can dang 'phrad par shog : 'chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du chos 'di ma rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o :: dge'o
(KS-212.6-13; S1-356.2-5) e ma zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las : bar do thos grol chos kyi cha rkyen du : 'chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol 'di bstan pas : 'di bzhin rtogs shig phyi rabs mal 'byor rnams : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : skal ldan las can shes rab blo dang ldan : dad brtson snying rje can dang 'phrad par shog : 'chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du chos 'di ma rdzogs so : samaya : Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

TRANSLATION Tucci 1972: 209-232; Mullin 1986: 131-148

ENTRY NO. 053

TITLE 'Chi ltas mtshan ma rang grol nam mkha'i tshe gzungs brtag pa'i dpe ris
Self-liberated omens and signs of death: dhāraṇi of longevity and diagrams of signs

SUBJECT 'chi bslu

REFERENCE PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. [=052]

TITLE 'Chi ba brtag thabs mtshan ma rang grol
Self-liberation of the signs and methods for analyzing death

SUBJECT ngo sprod

REFERENCE ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 054

TITLE 'Chi zlog gshin rje'i gter chen lhan thabs glud rabs dang bcas pa
Supplement to the great treasure of shinje on averting death, including the family ransom [ritual]

AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)

SUBJECT 'chi bslu (TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE TLSY

ENTRY NO. 055

TITLE 'Chi bslu 'jigs pa rang grol
Self-liberation of fear: a death ransom

AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa

SUBJECT 'chi bslu (DJTY, ZDTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE B1 (12f, 23p), B1a (477-498), B4 (12f, 23p), BL 3283 (12f), BL 3444 (12f), CM, DH (467-489), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, T3 (9f, 17p), TLSY, ZDTY

COLOPHON (B1; B1a-498.5; B4; DH-489.1; T3) Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o // samaya rgya rgya rgya :

ENTRY NO. 056

TITLE Chi bslu'i 'khor lo bri thabs (dpe'u ris dang bcas pa)

	Technique for drawing the circle for the death ransom [ritual], including diagrams
SUBJECT	'chi bslu (DJTY=ngo sprod)
REFERENCE	DJTY

ENTRY NO.	057
TITLE	Mjug tu mar me'i smon lam Prayer for light at the end
SUBJECT	smon lam
REFERENCE	ZH (353-355)

ENTRY NO.	058
TITLE	Rje btsun sūrya tsandra'i rmi lam bar do thos grol chos kyi che ba bskyed byed mtshan med rdzogs rim lhan thabs kyi skor bzhi Venerable sūryacandra's dream [concerning] the fourfold cycle of suplements to the signless completion stage which develops the supremacy of the doctrine of the liberation upon hearing in the bardo
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	rdzogs rim, thos grol (DJTY=ngo sprod)
REFERENCE	DJTY, T7v3 (219-254)

ENTRY NO.	[=141-146]
TITLE	Nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol [=Bar do drug gi khrid yig] Self-liberated wisdom mind: the experiential instructions
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]

ENTRY NO.	059
TITLE	Nyams chags sdig sgrib thams cad bshags pa'i rgyal po na rag dong sprug(s) Dredging the depths of hell: the sovereign [rite] of confession [atoning for] all broken vows, transgressions, and obscurations
AUTHOR(s)	'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899) [?]
SUBJECT	bskang bshags, dong sprugs
REFERENCE	CH (423-450), NE (11f), ZH (333-355)
COLOPHON	(ZH-355.1-2) spar 'di zhe chen bstan gnyis dar rgyas gling du theg mchog padma'i dga' tshal du bzhugs pa dge gyur cig // dge'o
TRANSLATION	Dowman 1994 [?]

ENTRY NO.	060
TITLE	Rnying ma spyi'i sngon 'gro skyabs sems dang dkar bgegs kyi gtor ma General preliminary [practices of] the nyingma [school]: taking refuge, [generating] the mind [of enlightenment, offering] torma to the obstructing demons and the white torma [to the local spirits]
SUBJECT	gtor ma, sngon 'gro
REFERENCE	S3 (5f, 9p)
COLOPHON	(S3) bgegs gtor phyi rol du dor / de nas las byang so so'i mtshams gcod la 'jug go // maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	061
TITLE	Bsnyen yig mdor bsdus rnam grol don gsal Clear goal of complete liberation: an abbreviated recitation manual

AUTHOR(s) 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899)
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE B3 (133-145), T7v2 (239-253)
COLOPHON (B3-145.4-5; T7v2-252.6-253.1) sangs rgyas gnyis pa o rgyan rdo rje thod phreng rtsal gyi sngags rig 'dzin pa Padma gar dbang 'phrin las 'gro 'dul rtsal gyis rdzogs shed zhi khro bde / gshegs kun 'dus kyi pho brang du bgyis pa dge legs 'phel

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ENTRY NO. 062
TITLE Gti mug gnyid skrogs (dang mi rtag rgyud la bskul ba'i ngag 'don)
Churning the sleep of delusion and a liturgical exhortation to [keep] impermanence in one's mind-stream
SUBJECT thos grol
REFERENCE T4 (1-5a.5)

ENTRY NO. 063
TITLE Gter gzhung me mchod kyi las byang sbyin sreg phrin las rang grol
Root treasure text of "the self-liberated enlightened activities": a ritual manual and burnt offering for the fire offering
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DJTY, ZDTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE DJTY, PLKC (8f), ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 064
TITLE Gter srung sgam po lha rtse'i mchod gsol phrin las rang grol
Self-liberated enlightened activities: offering and invocation to the treasure protectors of gampo lhatse
AUTHOR(s) Padma mdo sngags bstan 'dzin [=Padma rig 'dzin, 1625-1697 ?]
SUBJECT bstan srung
REFERENCE PY (213-218), T8v1 (267-272)
COLOPHON (PY-218.4-5; T8v1-272.4-5) zhes pa'ang sngar gyi yig snying sor bzhag 'khrugs sdeb dang gsal byed cung zad kyis brgyan ta Padma mdo sngags bstan 'dzin gyis sbyar ba dge'o

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ENTRY NO. 065
TITLE Gtor dbang dngos grub kun 'byung
Torma initiation [which is] the source of all siddhis
SUBJECT gtor ma (DJTY=dbang)
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 066
TITLE Gtor dbang reg pa don ldan
Torma initiation that is meaningful to touch
AUTHOR(s) Padmasambhava; Ye shes mtsho rgyal; Karma gling pa; Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678); requested by Chos dbang kun bzang
DATE/PLACE Sgam po gdar gyi ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT gtor ma (DJTY, DLSY=smin byed dbang; TLSY=dbang sgrub; ZDTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE B3 (117-131), CH (751-770), DJTY, DLSY, NE (3f, 5p), T7v1 (161-163), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (551-553)

COLOPHON (B3-131.2-6) 'phros don ni / gtor dbang 'di gzhung na nyung du mi gsal tsam gcig yod par 'dug cing gzhung nas kyang kha 'phang bar mdzad 'dug / da lta gtor dbang yongs grags 'di Chos kyi rgya mtshos mdzad pa yin zhing / 'di'i lha bskyed lugs 'dir sngar gyi zhi khro bka' ma dang Grub thob Me long rdo rje'i lugs ltar yin par snang yang / de ltar byed na cho ga yang de dang bstun dgos par mngon la / 'dir Karma gling pa'i gter kha ltar las byang rgyas bsdus gang rung gi cho ga dbang sgrub ba'i tshe na dbang lha bskyed lugs ni las byang dang bstun pa 'di legs so / gzhan tshig gi go ba cung zad sprad bkra shis sogs phyag len gyis rgyan / yig cha ma dag pas don 'chug skyon byung ba cung zad 'dug pa la / tshig gi go bde ba don mi 'chugs pa khyer bde bar byas pa 'di ni Chos dbang kun bzang kis bskul ba ltar / rnal 'byor ba Karma rāgas gro bzhin zla ba'i yar tshes gsum gyi nyin par kho nar rdzogs par sbyar ro / 'di la 'gal 'khrul gang mchis pa / dam pa rigs brgya'i lha tshogs dang / bka' srung chos bdag rnams la bshags / dge bas 'gro ba ma lus pa / bar do gsum po shar ba'i tshe / sku gsum mngon tu 'gyur bar shog / ma tshogs dbang phyug nyer brgyad dang / bka' srung dam can sde bdun gyis / chos 'di dar zhing rgyas pa dang / bkra shis bde legs 'grub par mdzod / sarvamaṅgalam

(NE) Grub thob Karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas gton pa'o

(ZH-553.5-6) tshig nyung don che dngos grub nyur : gtor dbang reg pa don ldan 'di : rgyud las bstan te Padmas bkod : mTsho rgyal dag gis zin bris byas : phyi rabs rnams la phan thogs shog : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : gter rgya : sbas rgya : zab rgya : Grub thob Karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas bton pa'o

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ENTRY NO. 067
TITLE Btags grol 'khor lo chen po'i dpe ris
Diagrams of the great circle of the liberation [through] wearing
SUBJECT btags grol
REFERENCE PLKC (4f)

ENTRY NO. 068
TITLE Btags grol 'khor lo 'bring po'i dpe ris
Diagrams of the medium circle of the liberation [through] wearing
SUBJECT btags grol
REFERENCE PLKC (6f)

ENTRY NO. 069
TITLE Btags grol 'khor lo chung ba'i dpe ris
Diagrams of the small circle of the liberation [through] wearing
SUBJECT btags grol
REFERENCE PLKC (3f)

ENTRY NO. 070
TITLE Btags grol bca' thabs
Technique for constructing the liberation [through] wearing
SUBJECT btags grol
REFERENCE PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. 071
TITLE Btags grol phung po rang grol
Self-liberation of the body, liberation [through] wearing
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE Sgam po gdar kyi ri, Dwags po
SUBJECT btags grol (DJTY, ZDTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=btags grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE — B1 (25f, 49p), B1a (213-260), B2 (105b.4-117b.5), B4 (25f, 49p), BL 3276 (25f), BL 3318 (26f), BL 3438 (25f), CM, DH (263-311), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, PLKC (9f), T3 (18f), T7v3 (255-286), TLSY, ZDTY

COLOPHON — (B1; B1a-260.3-5; B4; DH-310.3-311.1; T3) de ni mthong thos dran rig grol : zhi khro rig brgya 'dus pa yis : btags grol phung po rang grol zhes bya ba rdzogs so : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : 'di 'phrad mal 'byor don dang ldan : ji srid 'khor ba ma stong bar : dam chos 'di nyid ma rdzogs so : 'di bris dag pa'i byin rlabs gyis : las ngan sdig sgrib ma lus dag pa dang : phung po gdos bcas 'od lus grub par smon
(B2-117b.3-5; T7v3-285.6-286.2) de ni mthong thos dran rig grol : zhi khro dam pa rig brgya 'dus pa'i btags grol phung po rang grol zhes bya ba rdzogs so : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : gter rgya : gter ston Karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri nas gdan drangs pa'i gter ma lags so

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ENTRY NO. — 072

TITLE — Btags grol phung po rang grol nas zur khol du bkod pa'i btags grol 'khor lo chen mo zhe bya lag len zin bris
Memorandum on a practice entitled "the greal wheel of the liberation [through wearing]" which has been separately arranged from "the self-liberation of the body, liberation [through] wearing"

AUTHOR(s) — Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)

SUBJECT — btags grol (DJTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=btags grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE — DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (7f), T7v1 (467-492), TLSY

ENTRY NO. — 067

TITLE — Btags grol phung po rang grol las don bsdus rang grol snying po
Essential heart of the abbreviated meaning of self-liberation from "the self-liberation of the body, liberation [through] wearing"

AUTHOR(s) — Karma gling pa

SUBJECT — btags grol (DJTY, ZDTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=btags grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE — B2 (117b.5-123b.3), DJTY, DLSY, GK (277-295), KS (120-130), NE (8f), PLKC (5f), PY (167-185), RB (16f), S1 (229-253), SGA (96-103a), T5 (11f, 21p), T7v3 (287-306), T8v1 (233-249), TLSY, ZDTY

COLOPHON — (B2-123b.3; KS-130.14; NE; PY-185.6; S1-252.2; SGA; T5; T7v3-306.6; T8v1-249.6) 'gro mgon Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

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ENTRY NO. — 074

TITLE — Btags grol yid bzhin nor mchog
Pure wish-fullfilling jewel of liberation [through] wearing

AUTHOR(s) — Rig 'dzin Rgod ldem phrul can (1337-1408)

DATE/PLACE — Zang zang lha brag

SUBJECT — btags grol

REFERENCE — B1 (12f, 23p), B4 (12f, 23p), CM, DH (539-561), JVM, T3 (11f, 21p)

COLOPHON — (B1; B4; DH-560.5-561.1; T3) zang zang lha brag gi skad nas Rig 'dzin Rgod kyi ldem phrul can gyis gter nas bton pa'o

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ENTRY NO. — 075 [appended 091]

TITLE — Thugs rje chen po ma rig mun sel las thos grol tshor ba rang grol
Liberation upon hearing, the self-liberation of feeling from "the great compassionate one, dispelling the darkness of ignorance"

AUTHOR(s) — Rig 'dzin Nyi ma grags (1647-1710)

DATE/PLACE — lcags spre lo, 6th month [=1680]; Byams sprin gyi gtsug lag khang, Mang yul; Srin mo rdzong gyi phug nag, Khams

SUBJECT thos grol
REFERENCE B1 (2f, 3p), B2 (134b.6-135b.2), B4 (2f, 3p), DH (319-321), JVM, T3 (2f, 3p)
COLOPHON (B1; B2-135b.2; B4; DH-321.2-4; T3) bdag khams pa Nyi ma grags pas mang yul byams sprin gyi gtsug lag khang nas gdan drangs shing : khams sring [srin, DH] mo rdzong gi phug nag O rgyan sgrub gnas su shogs ser las lcags spre hor zla drug par zhal bzhus pa'o

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ENTRY NO. 076
TITLE Them byang zin bris
Memorandum [concerning] the register certificate [for "the profound doctrine of the self-liberated wisdom mind of the peaceful and wrathful deities]
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
SUBJECT lo rgyus
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, T7v1 (1-6), TLSY
COLOPHON (T7v1-6.2-5) de nas Karma gling pa de nyid kyi gter nas gdan drangs nas brgyud 'dzin gyi Nyi zla chos rje la gcig brgyud du gnang : des kyang gzhan su la yang bstan par gcig brgyud dang lung gzhan gyi skyes bu brgyud pa gsum pa Guru Suryacandrarasmi'i mtshan can la gnang ste : lo drug gi bar du gzhan su la yang la bstan : rang nyid nyams su long gcig gsungs : lo drug song nas gzhan la bstan pa'i lung gnang : de nas bka' rgya bkrol ba lags so : dge'o / bkra shis so

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ENTRY NO. [=084]
TITLE Thung mong ma yin pa don brgyud kyi gsol 'debs kyi ming tshig rang grol
AUTHOR(s) Bu 'bor ba Bkra shis rgya mtsho
Self-liberation of the essential names: supplication to the uncommon authentic lineage
SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE GK (43-46), PY (33-38)

ENTRY NO. [=048]
TITLE Thugs rje chen po padma zhi khro'i nyams khrid yang snying lam khyer las chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
Great liberation upon hearing: instructions for recollecting the bardo of reality included in "the application of the quintessential experiential guiding instructions from "the great compassionate one, the peaceful and wrathful deities of the lotus"
SUBJECT gsal 'debs, thos grol
REFERENCE RB (67f)

ENTRY NO. [=097]
TITLE Thos grol chen mo yid bzhin nor bu
Great liberation upon hearing [entitled] "the wish-fulfilling jewel"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE Sgam po brdar gyi ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE BL 3316 (41f)

ENTRY NO. 077
TITLE Thos grol chen mo'i skor gyi dkar chag mthong bas don gsal

	Ultimate clarity through seeing the table of contents of the cycle of "the great liberation upon hearing"
AUTHOR(s)	Mani bhadra [=Nor bu bzang po, Bhutanese lo phyag to the Lhasa government]
DATE/PLACE	chu mo lug lo [=1943]; 'Brug spa spro chos ldan bskyed chu lha khang
SUBJECT	dkar chag
REFERENCE	B1 (4f, 3p), B4 (4f, 3p), BL 3073 (4f)
COLOPHON	(B1; B4) 'di ni 'brug gzhung lha ldan sku tshab lo phyag pa Mani bhadrar 'bod pas rab rgyal chu mo lug lor bar du bskrun pas dge bcas spyi sgo la rgyal bstan dar zhing / de 'dzin skyes chen zhabs pad brtan la / lhag par 'brug rgyal mchog gi bstan 'gror rlabs chen thugs bskyed dam bca'i bzhed don lhag bsam gyi mdzad 'phrin rnams dbyar mtsho ltar 'phel ba'i 'gyur cig / par 'di 'brug spa spro chos ldan bskyed chu lha khang la bzhugs so

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ENTRY NO.	078
TITLE	Mtha' rten rjes kyi dbang bskur gsal ba'i me long Mirror that illuminates the initiation of final suport
SUBJECT	dbang (DJTY, DLSY=smin byed dbang; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DI, TLSY

ENTRY NO.	[=010]
TITLE	Dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi mdang bskang gdug pa rang grol Self-liberation of poison: [prayers of] expiation to the assembly of all the dharma protectors of the seven classes of the oath-bound
SUBJECT	bstan srung
REFERENCE	PLKC (3f)

ENTRY NO.	079
TITLE	Dam can sde bdun chos skyong kun 'dus kyi gsol ka 'dod yon rang grol Self-liberation of sensual pleasures: supplications to the assembly of all the dharma protectors of the seven classes of the oath-bound
SUBJECT	bstan srung
REFERENCE	PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO.	080
TITLE	Dam chos rdzogs pa chen po ngo sprod kyi skor las kham pa'i mi mo la brten nas rnam shes 'byung 'jug gnas gsum ngo sprod Direct introduction to the emerging, entering, and abiding of consciousness in dependence upon a worldly woman from "the cycle of direct introductions to the sacred doctrine of the great perfection"
AUTHOR(s)	Rnam rgyal bzang po; requested by Ngag gi ye shes
SUBJECT	ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (3f), T7v2 (443-467), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-467.1-2) bla ma dam pa Ngag gi ye shes kyis yang yang bskul ba las brten te / gong ma'i rjes btsun Rnam rgyal bzang pos zin ris su bkod pa'o

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ENTRY NO.	081
TITLE	Dam chos rdzogs pa chen po'i sku gsum ngo sprod bar do thos grol gyi cha lag

Direct introduction to the three embodiments of the sacred doctrine of the great perfection: an auxiliary [practice] of "the liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE DJTY, PLKC (3f), T7v2 (443-467), ZDTY
COLOPHON (T7v2-493.2) grub thos Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs pa'o

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ENTRY NO. 082
TITLE Dam pa rigs brgya'i dkyil 'khor bkod pa
Arrangement of the mandala of the one hundred sacred ones
SUBJECT bskyed rim
REFERENCE PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. 083
TITLE Dur khrod ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs mi rtag bskul 'debs
Exhortation on impermanence: a supplement to the cemetery direct introduction
SUBJECT ngo sprod
REFERENCE PLKC (3f), WadB 84f (5f)
COLOPHON (WadB 84f-5b) dur khrod ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs mi rtag pa'i bskul 'debs zhes bya ba'o : 'di bris dge bas sangs rgyas myur thob shogs :: dge'o

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ENTRY NO. 084
TITLE Don brgyud gsol 'debs ming tshig rang grol
Self-liberation of the essential names: supplication to the authentic lineage
AUTHOR(s) Bu 'bor ba Bkra shis rgya mtsho; Padma mdo sngags bstan 'dzin [=Padma rig 'dzin, 1625-1697 ?]
SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE GK (43-46), PY (33-38), T5 (2f), T8v2 (1-3)
COLOPHON (GK-46.6; PY-38.1) Bkra shis rgya mtshos mdzad pa dge legs su gyur cig
(T5; T8v2-3.4-5) slar yang Thugs rje 'od zer nas rim par Chags med zhabs dang / de nas dpal yul gdan rabs la brgyud tshul gtsor bton zhal skong bcas Padma mdo sngags bstan 'dzin gyis bris pa dge'o / sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 085
TITLE Drag po'i sbyin sreg gi dpe ris
Diagrams for the fierce burnt offering
SUBJECT sbyin sreg
REFERENCE PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. 086
TITLE Drag po'i sbyin bsreg gud du bstan pa('i yig chung)
Short notes for presenting separately the fierce burnt offering
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE DLSY, PLKC (7f), T7v2 (117-122)

ENTRY NO. 087
TITLE Bdud rtsi khā hi
Khā hi of nectar

AUTHOR(s) Padma kun grol
SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE ZH (133)
COLOPHON (ZH-133.5) rje dpon Padma kun grol gyis mdzad pa'o

ENTRY NO. 088
TITLE 'Dod chags rang grol gyi nang nas rigs brgyud bzhag thabs dang mngal sgo 'gags thabs khol du byung ba
Adaptation of the meditative techniques of the family lineage and the techniques for closing the womb-door included within "the self-liberation of desire"
AUTHOR(s) Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21] [?]
SUBJECT thabs lam
REFERENCE DJTY [?], T7v3 (421-437), TLSY [?]

ENTRY NO. [=089]
TITLE Na rag bskang bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha lag tshe 'das 'gro drug rang grol gyi zin bris
Memorandum on "the self-liberation of the six [classes] of beings, guiding the deceased [to a higher] state: an auxiliary [practice] of 'the self-liberation of broken vows through expiation and confession'"
AUTHOR(s) Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678)
DATE/PLACE shing sbrul lo [=1665], between the 20th day of the the 10th month and the second day of the 11th month
SUBJECT gnas 'dren, bskang bshags
REFERENCE GK (849-939), PLKC (15f)

ENTRY NO. 089
TITLE Gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol khrigs su bkod pa
Proper arrangement of "the self-liberation of the six [classes] of beings, guiding [them to a higher] state"
AUTHOR(s) Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678); requested by dBon po Rgyal mtshan
DATE/PLACE shing sbrul lo [=1665], between the 20th day of the the 10th month and the second day of the 11th month
SUBJECT gnas 'dren
REFERENCE GK (849-939), PY (585-685), T5 (40f, 79p), T8v1 (391-471)
COLOPHON (GK-939.1-4; T5; T8v1-470.6-471.4) zhes pa zhi khro rang gzhung la gab 'khrugs bsal : khas pa dgos pa rnams O rgyan gsung gter kha gzhan nas cung zad kha bskang pa ste / 'tsho mdzad drag lu tshe las 'das dus dBon po Rgyal mtshan gyis bskul nas / bdag Rāgasyas shing sbrul gyi lo smin drug gi zla ba'i tshes nyi shu bskor nas brtsams te mgo zla ba'i tshes gnyis la tshar bar bris pa la nyes pa mchis na lha la bshags shing / dam can sde bdun dang dbang phyug nyer brgyad kyis bka' 'di srungs la / bcos slad med par dar zhing rgyas nas / tshe 'das dpag tu med pa bde ba can du skye ba'i rgyur gyur cig / maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 090
TITLE Gnas lung gi cho ga dang dbang bskur sogs la nye bar mkho ba'i zur 'debs phran bu
Minor addition to the full requirements for the ritual [of guiding the deceased] to a [higher] state, the conferring of initiations, and so forth

AUTHOR(s) Kun bzang blo gros [='Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas, 1813-1899 ?]
SUBJECT gnas 'dren, dbang
REFERENCE T7v2 (229-238)
COLOPHON (T7v2-236.4-238.5) Appended: story of Padmasambhava's prophecy concerning the excavation of the "thos grol" teachings by Karma gling pa, including mention of the first lineage-holders of the so-called "Thos grol tshor ba rang grol"

ENTRY NO. 091
TITLE Rnal 'byor gyi dam tshig bkang ba
Expiation of yogic commitments
SUBJECT bskang bshags
REFERENCE BL3319 (77f)

ENTRY NO. 092
TITLE Spyi don lung bstan gsal byed 'od kyi dra ba
Network of light illuminating the general meaning of the revelation prophecy
SUBJECT lo rgyus
REFERENCE DLSY, TLSY

ENTRY NO. 093
TITLE Phung po sreg sbyong gi kha skong
Supplement to the purification ritual of cremating the corpse
AUTHOR(s) Padma nor bu (1679-1757)
SUBJECT ro sreg
REFERENCE PY (847-863), T5 (1f), T8v2 (419-432)
COLOPHON (PY-863.1-2; T8v2-432.4) 'di ni gzhung dang bla ma'i gsungs rnams las / nyer mkho khyer bde bris pa Padma nor bus so // dge gyug cig // maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. [=079]
TITLE Phud rabs gsol kha 'dod yon rang grol (mdzad byang med pa tshig lhug)
Self-liberation of sensual pleasures: a propitiatory offering and oblation (written in prose without an author's colophon)
SUBJECT bstan srung
REFERENCE DJTY, PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. [=157 ?]
TITLE Phyag 'tshal ba'i dbu phyogs
Central location of the prostrations [?]
SUBJECT phyag 'tshal
REFERENCE PY (441-447)

ENTRY NO. [=186]
TITLE Phyogs bcu'i sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
Prayer requesting assistance from the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions
SUBJECT smon lam
REFERENCE BL 2203 (3f)

ENTRY NO. 094 [=160 ?]
TITLE Phrin las rang grol snying po
Essential heart of "the self-liberated enlightened activities"
SUBJECT dbang sgrub [?] (DJTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 095
TITLE Badzra gu ru'i phan yon dang 'bru 'grel
Blessing and word-for-word commentary on vajra guru
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE S2 (10f, 19p), T1 (5f)
COLOPHON (S2) sprul sku Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs te shogs ser las bshus pa'o / 'di bzhengs dge ba'i 'kron mas kun // padma 'od du skyed bar shog / par 'di jo khang ri khrod du bzhugs so // bkra shis
(T1) sprul sku Karma gling pas gter nas gdan drangs te shogs ser las bshus pa'o // phun gling gsung rab nyams gso rgyun spel dpar khang nas dpar du bskrun pa'o
TRANSLATION Tulku 1972: 17-38

ENTRY NO. 096
TITLE Bar do thos grol gyi dkar chag mthong ba kun grol
Total liberation [through] seeing the table of contents of the "liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
SUBJECT dkar chag
REFERENCE WadB 84a (2f)

ENTRY NO. [=030]
TITLE Bar do thos grol gyi gsol 'debs rim pa [Back=illegible] tshogs rang grol
Series of supplications of the "liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Rtse le sna tshogs rang grol (b. 1608) [?] [illegible print may read "rtse le sna"]
SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE SGA (1-4a)

ENTRY NO. [=048]
TITLE Bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya ba chos nyid bar do'i ngo sprod
Direct introduction to the bardo of reality entitled "the great liberation upon hearing"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE Chu bo gser ldan gyi 'gram, Sgam po gdar ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE BL 3315 (65f)

ENTRY NO. 097
TITLE Bar do thos grol chen mo las srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod
Direct introduction to the bardo of becoming from "the great liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE Sgam po brdar gyi ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol (DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)

REFERENCE	B1 (35f, 69p), B1a (143-211), B2 (74a.4-94a.1), B4 (35f, 69p), BL 684 (30f), BL 2201 (48f), BL 3000 (25f), BL 3275 (35f), BL 3316 (41f), BL 3437 (35f), CM, DH (193-261), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, KS (70-109), BL 684 (36f), PLKC (7f), RB (42f), S1 (107-172), SGA (44a-70a), T3 (29f, 57p), T7v3 (115-162), TLSY, WadB 84e (34f), WadB 87b (56f)
COLOPHON	(B1; B1a-211.3-5; B2-93b.6-94.1; B4; DH-261.3-5; S1-172.6-7; SGA; T3) bar do'i gdams pa lus can grol bar byed pa : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya ba : zab pa'i snying khung rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas sgam po brdar gyi ri bo nas rin chen gter nas gdan drangs ba'o (BL 3316-42.7-43.1) bar do'i gdams pa lus can grol bar byed pa : bar do thos grol chen mo zhes bya ba : zab pa'i snying khu rdzogs so : Grub thob Karma gling pas sgam po brdar gyi ri bo nas rin chen gter nas gdan drangs ba'o (KS-109.16-18) Grub thob Karma gling pas sgom po gdar gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'i gter ma'o : 'dis kyang bstan pa dang sems can la phan thogs par shog : sarvamaṅgalaṃ (WadB 84e-33b-34a) bar do gdams pa lus can grol bar byed pa bar do thos grol zhes bya ba zab pa'i snying khu rdzogs so : sarvamaṅgalaṃ (WadB 87b-56a) Grub thob Karma gling pas sgam po dar gyi ri bo nas / rin chen gter nas gdan drangs pa'o // sarvamaṅgalaṃ
TRANSLATION	Evans-Wentz 1960: 153-196; Tucci 1972: 151-186; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 72-94; Dargyay 1991: 139-170; Thurman 1994: 167-199; Prats 1996: 85-116

ENTRY NO.	[=141-146]
TITLE	Bar do drug gi khrid yig Guidebook to the six bardos
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]

ENTRY NO.	098
TITLE	Bar do drug gi rtsa tshig Root verses on the six bardos
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE	Dwags lha sgam po gyi ri bo
SUBJECT	ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	B1 (3f, 5p), B1a (129-133), B2 (95a.3-96a.2), B4 (3f, 5p), B5 (2f, 3p), BL 2198 (7f), CM, DH (179-183), DJTY, DLSY, GK (233.4-236.3), JVM, KS (113.6-115.1), BL 684, NE (2f, 3p), PY (341.2-343-6), RB (2f), S1 (218.4-221.4), SGA, T3 (3f, 5p), T4 (50b.2-53a.3), T5, T6 (403.6-407.1), T8v2 (387-389), TLSY, WadB 84m (3f), ZDTY, ZH
COLOPHON	(PY-350.1-2) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : samayā : Grub thob Karma gling pas dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo gsang gdan drangs pa'o
TRANSLATION	Evans-Wentz 1960: 202-205; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 98-99; Thurman 1994: 115-116; Wallace 1998: 277-286

ENTRY NO.	099
TITLE	Bar do drug ga'i 'khrid kyi rgyab chos 'khrul pa rang grol Self-liberation of deluded straying: suportive guiding instructions on the six bardos
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (14f), TLSY, ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 100
TITLE Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi smon lam
Prayer for deliverance from the perilous straits of the bardo
AUTHOR(s) Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE Dwags lha sgam po gyi ri bo
SUBJECT smon lam (DJTY, TLSY, ZDTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE B1 (4f, 7p), B1a (135-141), B2 (96a.2-97a.4), B4 (4f, 7p), B5 (2f, 3p), CM, DH (185-191), DJTY, DLSY, GK (236.3-239.4), JVM, KS (115.2-117.2), BL 684, NE (2f, 3p), PY (343.6-346.4), RB (4f, 7p), S1 (221.4-224.5), SGA, T3 (4f,7p), T4 (53a.3-58a.2), T5, T6 (407.1-411.2), T7v3, T8v2 (389-393), TLSY, WadB 841-2 (3f), ZDTY, ZH
COLOPHON (KS-116.20-117.2; NE) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so
(PY-350.1-2) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : samayā : Grub thob Karma gling pas dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo gsang gdan drangs pa'o
(T5) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so
TRANSLATION Evans-Wentz 1960: 199-202; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 100-102; Thurman 1994: 108-111; Wallace 1998: 286-291

ENTRY NO. 101
TITLE Bar do 'phrang sgrol gyi gsol 'debs
Suplications for deliverance from the perilous straits of the bardo
SUBJECT gsol 'debs (DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=ngo sprod)
REFERENCE DLSY, TLSY

ENTRY NO. 102
TITLE Bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo las nye bar bsdus pa thos pa rang grol
Self-liberation upon hearing [which] has been fully compiled from "the great liberation upon hearing, the direct introduction to the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Kāmala mati
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE GK (1023-1062)
COLOPHON (GK-1061.6-1062.2) zhes pa 'di nyid bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo'i tshig rnams rgyas pas blor chud dka' zhing phal cher yi ges 'jigs pa'o / lta ba yang kon pa yang mthong bas de las bstus te don mi bcug bar gsal bar bkong pa 'di ni mtha' khos btsun pa Kā ma la ma tis dben gnas sku bar dkar po'i ba gur du sbyar ba dge'o

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ENTRY NO. [=98, 100, 106 ?]
TITLE Bar do'i chos bshad pa gnad lde mig
Key to the essential explanation of the bardo teachings
AUTHOR(s) Mchog gyur gter chen Bde chen gling pa (1829-1870) [?]
SUBJECT smon lam
REFERENCE BL 684
COLOPHON (BL 684-11r.3-5) de skad che bdun tshig byed pa'i dus su : nyin de la lan sku lnga chos ldan cing : gsal gtab par bya'o : [?] gdams ngag nyam len 'gel rnam la ni gsal 'debs 'di kun du phan che zhing nan tar gnad che ba yin : rje dam pa rin po che'i dgongs pa : nor kyis dbang phyug chen po : rgyal sras Sde chen kling [gling] pas snying rje'i [?] nas / tshe 'das pa rnam don du gsung par bsngo sdod / bdag [?] rang gis rang bzhan la 'khod [?] bris so / bkra shis / dge ba //

ENTRY NO.	103
TITLE	Bar do'i nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol gyi sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dul byed lhan thabs Supplement to the practice of subduing one's own mind-stream: a preliminary [practice] of "the self-liberated wisdom, experiential guiding instructions on the bardo"
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY, ZDTY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, T7v2 (277-302), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-301.6-302.3) sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dul byed zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : bar do drug gi nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol las sngon 'gro rang rgyud 'dul byed 'di nyid : gter ston Karma gling pa'i sras kyi thu bo Chos rje pa'i phyag srol zhal gdams rnams : Guru Nyi zla 'od zer gyis yi ger bkod pa 'dis sangs rgyas kyi bstan pa phyogs dus gnas skabs thams cad du dar zhing rgyas la yun rings su gnas par gyur cig : maṅgalaṃ
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998: 13-51

ENTRY NO.	104
TITLE	Bar do'i thos grol gyi ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol gyi lag len (gyi zin bris) Memorandum on the rubrics of 'the self-liberated vision: a direct introduction to the liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT	ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE	DJTY

ENTRY NO.	105
TITLE	Bar do'i thos pa'i lam tshig chod par byed pa'i man ngag don bsdus thugs kyi nying khung Medial [text of the] "liberation upon hearing": the abbreviated meaning of the precepts which resolve the directions for hearing in the bardo [entitled] "the quintessence of the enlightened mind"
AUTHOR(s)	Rig 'dzin Shes rab rgyal mtshan
SUBJECT	man ngag, thos grol
REFERENCE	RB (23f)
COLOPHON	(RB) zhes pa bsam pa bzang pos bshad par bya'o : zab pa bas kyang che zab pa : O rgyan bla ma'i gsung gi bcud : bar do thos grol gdams pa'i gsung : rig 'dzin Shes rab rgyal mtshan gyis 'gro la phan phyir yi ger bkod : dge bas 'khor ba dong sprugs nas : zab chos 'di'i 'gro don ni : nyi ma zla ba ltar gyur cig : dge zhing bkra shis par gyur cig : shu bhaṃ : maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	[=141-146]
TITLE	Bar do'i dmar khrid nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol Self-liberated wisdom: the experiential guiding instructions on the bardo
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	ngo sprod
REFERENCE	PLKC (8f)

ENTRY NO.	106
TITLE	Bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma Intermediate state prayer that protects from fear
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa

DATE/PLACE Dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo
SUBJECT smon lam (DJTY, TLSY, ZDTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE B1 (3f), B1a (261-266), B2 (94a.1-95a.2), B4 (3f), B5 (2f, 3p), CM, DH (313-319), DJTY, DLSY, GK (239.5-242), JVM, KS (117.3-119), BL 684, NE (3f), PY (346.4-350), S1 (224.5-228), SGA, T3 (4f), T4 (58a.2-61a.3), T5, T6 (411.2-416), T7v3, T8v2 (393-395), TLSY, WadB 84n (3f), ZDTY, ZH
COLOPHON (B1; B1a-266.4-5; B2-95a.2; B4; DH-321.4-5; T3) bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyob ma zhes bya ba : O rgyan mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : ji srid 'khor ba'i 'jig rten ma stongs bar : de srid zab chos 'di yang ma rdzogs shog : rgya rgya rgya : sprul sku Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o
(PY-350.1-2) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : samayā : Grub thob Karma gling pas dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo gsang gdan drangs pa'o
(Wad 84n-3b) chos spyod rab gsal dang : U rgyan rin po ches mdzad pa'i bar do drug gi rtsa tshig thos grol chen po dang : bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyobs ma rdzogs so :: dpe'o
(ZH-400.5-6) bar do'i smon lam 'jigs skyob ma zhes bya ba 'di 'khor ba ma stong kyi bar du ma rdzogs so : zhes O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad de : mTsho rgyal gyis zin ris su bris pa phyis Karma gling pas sgam po gdal [sic] gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o // dge zhing bkra shis / sarvamaṅgalaṃ
TRANSLATION Evans-Wentz 1960: 205-208; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 103-105; Thurman 1994: 112-114; Wallace 1998: 291-295

ENTRY NO. [=098, 100, 106]
TITLE Bar do'i smon lam rnam gsum
Three bardo prayers
SUBJECT smon lam, thos grol
REFERENCE B5 (7f), KS (110-119), BL 684 (11f), NE (7f, 13p), S1 (213-228), SGA (70a-78a), T6 (399-416), T7v3 (315-327), ZH (389-400)
COLOPHON (B5) de ltar sang rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa : bar do drug gi rtsa tshig dang 'brel ba'i zhal gdams : bar do 'phrang sgrol dang bar do'i 'jigs skyob kyi smon lam bcas : O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas gyis mdzad pa 'khor ba ma stongs par du ma rdzogs so : samaya : Grub thob Karma gling pas dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o // dge'o

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ENTRY NO. 107
TITLE Bar do'i gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo bklag chog tu bkod pa 'khrul snang rang grol
Self-liberation of deluded perceptions: instructions for recollecting the bardo [from] "the great liberation upon hearing" which have been arranged as a liturgy for recitation
AUTHOR(s) Nges don bstan 'dzin bzang po (1794-1851); commerorative volume to mark the death of 'Jigs-med-dbang-phyug (d.1952), the second King of Bhutan, sponsored by the his son 'Jigs-med-rdo-rje-dbyang-phyug
DATE/PLACE Bsam gtan chos gling [=Rdzogs-chen-dgon]
SUBJECT gsal 'debs, thos grol
REFERENCE B2 (1-14b.4)

COLOPHON (B2-176a.6-176b.5; end of volume B2) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las bar do'i ngo sprod thos grol chen mo la / mthad 'os su gyur nga'i mdo rgyud dang chos spyod sogs byin rlabs zab gnad che ba du ma'i kha bskang gis brgyan ste bklag chog tu bgyis pa 'di ni / thos grol par du bzhengs pa po rnams kyi bskul ngor śākya'i dge slong Nges don bstan 'dzin bzang pos bsam gtan chos gling gi dge gnas su bkod pa'i dge bas mkha' khyab kyi 'gro ba thams cad gdod ma'i mgon po Kun tu bzang po'i go 'phangs myur du thob pa'i rgyur gyur cig / mangalam / dge'o // om svasti // lho phyogs nags mo'i ljongs kyis rgyal khab su / rgyal khrims chos bzhin skyongs ba'i rgyan gcig pu / 'bangs 'khor la sogs skya ser 'phro [?] kun la / nad mug dkon shing longs spyod phun sum tshogs / char chu dus snyoms lo phyug kun legs shing / lho phyogs dpal ldan 'brug pa'i rgyal khab tu / dmag 'khrugs med pa rgya bod spyi khyab gnon / sku yi 'bangs 'khor la sogs mi ser yang / bde skyid longs spyod thob pa'i skyabs drin can / 'dzam gling 'di na dkon pas chos kyis rgyal / gnam lo zhes pa chu po 'brug gis lor / dgongs pa rdzogs nas bde 'gro'i zhing du byon / sku mchog mya ngan 'das pa'i dgongs rdzogs su / shul bzhugs lcam che chos sgron mtshan zhes kyi(s) / lhag bsam dad pa'i mgo nas yang yang sgrubs / de ltar sgrubs pa'i phan yon rim bzhin nas // 'dzam gling yangs pa'i tha gru'i rgyal khab der / phun sum tshogs zhing bde skyid bkra shis shing // gong gi yab rgyal dam pa'i bstan pa ltar / slar yang rgyal sras bdag gis bstan pa yang / rgya bod gnyis su rab tu gnas gyur nas / dmag 'khrug la sogs med pa'i bde skyid dang // 'bangs 'khor mi ser rnams yang bde thob nas / char chu dus snyoms lo phyugs rtag legs shing / nad mug 'khrug brtsod bdud kyi rgud pa sogs / med par bde skyid dpal la longs spyod shog / nyin mtshan rtag tu chos la spyod par shog / mi zad spar gyi chos sbyin bskrun pa po / tā re rnam sprul rgyal lcam sku shogs kyi / glegs bam thos grol chen mo'i yig bskrun de / legs bris gsung pa bdag gas [?] bka' bzhin sgrubs / spar yig zhus dag rin chen dbang 'dus dang / sor mos 'phrul bsgyur spar brkos dbyangs 'dzom gyis / sgo gsum [?] la nas tshul 'dir 'bad pa yi / rgyu sbyor bris brkos la sogs 'brel thog kun / gnas ska bla nyer 'tshe kun zhi tshe bsod 'phel / mchog gsum kun 'dus tshe dpag med mgon gyis / brtse ba chen po'i rjes su 'dzin 'gyur cig / lhan cig gsung gi bdud rtsi myong par shog / zhi dbyings klong du mngon par byang chu ba shog / stug po bkong du chos sku kun tu bzang / thog ma'i sangs rgyas drung du skye bar shog / mdzad med chos sbyin 'gyed pa'i spar shing de / bum thang bkra shis chos gling pho brang bzhugs // dge'o / dge'o / bkris shog / maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 108

TITLE Bum dbang bsdus par bskur tshul dang shin tu bsdus pa gtor dbang bcas gcig tu sdebs nas nag 'gros su bkod pa thos tshad rang grol
Self-liberation [through only] a measure of hearing: methods for conferring the abbreviated vase initiation along with the extremely abbreviated torma initiation which have been edited into a single [text] and arranged for convenient liturgical recitation

AUTHOR(s) 'Jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po (1820-1892)

SUBJECT dbang

REFERENCE T6 (417-482)

COLOPHON (T6-481.6-482.4) bsod nams 'di yis thams cad sogs brjod pa / slob ma rnams rang gnas su btang / gong mtshams chad brtan nas bzung ste / rjes kyi bya ba las byang che chung ltar bya'o / dam pa'i gsung rab man shel phreng bzab par / chos byung brgyud khung gtor dbang mtha' rten sogs / gsal byed rkyan pung do shal gsang ba 'dis / mchog sman skyes bu'i mgul ba mdzes gyur cig / de ltar bgyis par mongs mchis mkhas la bshags / pad tshal ltar 'bar ltar dges bstan dang 'gro ro / phan bde'i sgo phar dbye bya'i rgyur gyur nas / bdag gzhan bya chen bla med thob gyur smon / ji ltar brjod 'di 'chi med kyi btsun la na smin blo gzhon can / mKhyen(ṃ) brtser(ṃ) 'bod las legs pa sgrigs pa'i / yi ge'i 'du byed blo bzang ngo / maṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 109

TITLE Bla ma rgyud pa'i phyag 'tshal byin rlabs phrin phung
Heap of messages of salutation and blessing to the lineage lamas

AUTHOR(s) Padma mati (1591-1637)

SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE GK (327-335), PY (219-228), T5 (4f, 7p), T8v1 (283-290)
COLOPHON (GK-335.4-5; PY-228.4-6; T5; T8v1-290.4-6) de ltar bla ma brgyud pa'i phyag 'tshal 'di / byin rlabs kun gyi rtsa ba yin pa'i phyir / bskang bshags long dang skabs su sbyar ba yi / byin rlabs tshad med rtog sgrib rang grol nas / ye shes sgrib med rang zhal mjal bar 'gyur / de phyir Padma matis bris pa'o // sarvamaṅgalaṃ // dge'o

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ENTRY NO. 110
TITLE Bla ma brgyud rim gyi bskang ba 'brel tshe rang grol
Self-liberation of life in connection with [requests for] expiation to the series of lineage lamas
AUTHOR(s) Padma mati (1591-1637)
SUBJECT bskang bshags
REFERENCE GK (533-543)
COLOPHON (GK-543.1-2) de ltar bla ma brgyud pa'i bskang ba 'di / rang gzhung dag la mi snang phyir ru ni / blun rmongs Padma matis bris pa yis / dge bas nyams chags rtog sgrib rang grol shog / sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 111
TITLE Bla ma rig 'dzin gyi mdongs skong rtog sgrib rang grol
Self-liberation of conceptual obscuration, correcting lama rigdzin's blindness
AUTHOR(s) Bu 'bor ba Bkra shis rgya mtsho
SUBJECT bskang bshags
REFERENCE GK (521-530), PY (515-523), T5 (4f)
COLOPHON (GK-530.2-3; PY-523.3-4; T5) bskang ba'i cho ga'i kha bskang gso ba'i phyir / 'di (btsams) Bkra shis rgya mtsho mchan dge bas 'di rdzogs tham cad kyis / nyams chags gang song nyams sgrib dag gyur cig / dge'o

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ENTRY NO. 112
TITLE Bla ma'i gsung dpang du bzhag ste
Confession to [those who bear] witness: the lama's teaching [?]
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT bskang bshags (DJTY=rdzogs rim)
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 113
TITLE Dbang bskur 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol
Self-liberation of the six [classes of] beings: the intermediate initiation
AUTHOR(s) 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899)
DATE/PLACE Tsā 'dra rin chen brag, Bikoṭi [?]
SUBJECT dbang (DJTY=smin byed dbang)
REFERENCE DJTY, T5 (21f)
COLOPHON (T5) lugs 'di'i mig rnying rigs cur nyog cing phyag len la ltos dgos bas mi gsar pa dang / mkhas pa rnams kyis bya sla'i gnas su dor bas rang 'dra'i dpe chog mkhan rnams la phan du re nas / sangs rgyas padma'i snang brnyan gyis rjes su bzung ba'i dus zhabs kyi rnal 'byor ba yang ma Gar dbang blo gros mtha' yas pa'i sdes dpal de bikoṭi'i yad khrod tsā 'dra rin chen brag gi sgrub gnas su sbyar ba dge legs 'phel

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ENTRY NO. 114
TITLE Dbang gi dngos gzhi'i 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi spros bcas bum dbang chen mo

	Great elaborate vase initiation from "the self-liberation of whatever is encountered [during] the main part of the initiation"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE	Sgam po gdar kyi ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT	dbang (DJTY, DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub; ZDTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, T7v1 (49-93), T8v2 (171-217), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v1-92.2-3; T8v2-217.3-6) Grub thob Karma gling pas : sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o : / oṃ svasti / 'khor 'das byed po kun bzang dgongs pa'i bcud / rmad byung mtsho skyes rdo rjes yongs byin pa'i / thos grol spros bcas bum dbang mi zad par / dri med ston mtshan zla ba 'bum brdal ba / bro tshong Padma dgra 'dul lhag bsam gyis / sku gshegs nor sgrol dge rtsar legs bskrun pa'i / dge 'dis 'brel thogs yid can ma lus kun / gdod ma'i mgon gyis rdzas su 'dzin gyur cig / ces pa 'di'ang Vajra'i ming gis smos pa'o // sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	115 [=020]
TITLE	Dbang gi sngon 'gro lhan thabs Supplement to the preliminaries of initiation
SUBJECT	dbang
REFERENCE	PLKC (8f)

ENTRY NO.	116
TITLE	Dbang gi sta gon sngon 'gro rin chen sgron me'i lhan thabs gsal bar bkod pa the tshom rang grol Self-liberation of doubt: a clearly arranged suplemental [practice] of "the precious lamp of the preliminaries [for] initiation preparations"
AUTHOR(s)	'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899)
DATE/PLACE	Bikoṭi [?]
SUBJECT	dbang
REFERENCE	B3 (31-49), T7v2 (123-144)
COLOPHON	(B3-49.1-2) zhi khro'i smin dbang rgyas 'bring gnyis kar sbyor bde pa'i phyir zur phyung bklags pas grub par śrī de bikoṭi'i dben khrod rgyal dbang padma'i rjes 'jug dus zhabs kyi rnal 'byor ku sā li Padma gar dbang blo gros mtha' yas gyis sbyar ba dge legs 'phel

ENTRY NO.	117
TITLE	Dbang gi sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i dpe'u ris Diagrams for chanting separately the power burnt offering
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg (DJTY=dbang, bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, PLKC (2f), T7v1 (507-510)

ENTRY NO.	118
TITLE	Dbang gi sbyin bsreg gud du ston pa'i yig chung Short notes for chanting separately the power burnt offering
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg (DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	DLSY, PLKC (6f), T7v2 (95-116)

ENTRY NO.	119
TITLE	Dbang sgrub dus su bum pa sta gon bum sgrub dang bcas pa

	Vase preparations during the initiation consecration, including the vase consecration
AUTHOR(s)	Chos 'byung [=He pa chos 'byung ?]
SUBJECT	dbang sgrub
REFERENCE	PY (189-202)
COLOPHON	(PY-202.6) Chos 'byung bdag gis rnams par bkod pa'o

ENTRY NO.	120
TITLE	Dbang bsdus Digest of initiations
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	dbang
REFERENCE	CH (631-682), NE (14f, 27p), ZH (513-534)
COLOPHON	(ZH-534.5-6) ngo sprod rgyas par bya'o : de nas gtang rag gi maṇḍala 'bul zhing tshogs la rol : nyams skyong : glu gar bya : lhag ma btang : rjes kyi rim pa rnams las byang ltar ba'o : rgyas par na dbang gong ma zab dbang gsum dang bcas dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol las zhes bar bya'o : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

ENTRY NO.	121
TITLE	Dbang rnams kyi rgyab yig Initiations at the end of the book
SUBJECT	dbang
REFERENCE	PLKC (5f)

ENTRY NO.	122
TITLE	Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi brgyud pa'i lo rgyus Transmission history of "the self-liberation of whatever is encountered: the four initiations"
AUTHOR(s)	Chos rje Dge 'dun rgyal mtshan [=Saṁghagetu, b. 1446]
SUBJECT	lo rgyus
REFERENCE	DJTY

ENTRY NO.	123
TITLE	Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi sngon 'gro gsal ba'i sgron me (rgya skad can) Lamp illuminating the preliminary [rites] of "the self-liberation of whatever is encountered: the four initiations" (in Sanskrit)
SUBJECT	dbang (ZDTY [?]=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, ZDTY [?]

ENTRY NO.	124
TITLE	Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi rjes kyi rim pa gsal ba'i me tog Radiant flower: the concluding stages of "the self-liberation of whatever is encountered: the four initiations"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE	Sgam po gdar gyi ri ro, Dwags po
SUBJECT	dbang (DJTY, DLSY [?]=smin byed dbang; TLSY [?]=dbang sgrub; ZDTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	CH (685-694), DJTY, DLSY, GK (843-848), NE (3f), T7v1 (93-125), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (545-550)
COLOPHON	(T7v1-125.1) gter ston Karma gling pas sgam po rdar gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o

ENTRY NO.	125
TITLE	Dbang bzhi 'phrad tshad rang grol gyi gsang dbang bde chen rang grol la sogs dbang gong ma gsum gyi zab gsal khyad par can Three superior initiations which are especially profound and luminuous: the secret initiation of "the self-liberation of whatever is encountered: the four initiations", "the self-liberation of great bliss", and so forth
AUTHOR(s)	Ye shes mtsho rgyal; Karma gling pa; rDo rje rgyal mtshan
DATE/PLACE	Sgam po rdar gyi ri bo, Dwags po
SUBJECT	dbang (DJTY, DLSY=smin byed dbang; TLSY=dbang sgrub; ZDTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, T7v1 (165-168; incomplete [?]), T8v2 (219-253), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T8v2-253.1-6) ema bdag 'dra Ye shes mtsho rgyal gyis : dbang bzhi'i phyag len zab mo 'di : rgyud las byung nas yi ger bkod : O rgyan phyag bzhes ji lta ba : gab 'khrug gong 'og yod re kan : bzhi rdzogs 'dir skur snod ldan ni : brgya lam na'ang res 'ga' tsam : kun la bum dbang 'brel ba thogs : kong ma gsum po shin tu gsang : ma 'ongs snyigs ma lnga yi dus : bzhi rdzogs dbang thob res 'ga' tsam : skal ldan rnams kyi rgyud smin phyir : shin tu zab pas yi ger btab : snyigs dus rnam mkhyen gcig gis grol : dbang bzhi'i chu rgyun 'phrad tshad rang grol zhes bya ba : bdag 'dra Ye shes mtsho rgyal gyis yig brgya rtsa brgyad du btab pa rdzogs so : samayā : gter ston Karma gling pas sgam po rdar gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o : :/ oṃ svasti siṅgha / rnam grol sku bzhi'i rin 'byung las 'bab pa'i / rnam dag dbang bzhi'i rgyun bzang gaṅga'i chab / rnam mang 'gro blo'i bum par bsti ba'i phyir / rnam dkar dge ba'i chos byin spel la 'di mtshar / gang zhig mtho ris yon tan bdun gyi nor // gang gis longs su 'byor pa dgram 'du lam nas // gang 'di bskrun par dge tshogs rmad byung ba // gang mchis byang chub chen por yongs su bsngo // zhes pa'ang ban gzugs 'dzin pa rDo rje rgyal mtshan nas smon pa sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	[=126]
TITLE	Sbyin sreg gi sngon 'gro sta gon bcu gnyis gyis bstan pa Preliminaries and preparations for the burnt offering: a twelve-fold teaching
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg (DJTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed-dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, TLSY

ENTRY NO.	126
TITLE	Sbyin sreg phrin las rang grol gyi sngon 'gro sta gon rim pa Stages of the preliminaries and preparations for the burnt offering
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg
REFERENCE	PLKC (4f)

ENTRY NO.	127
TITLE	Sbyin sreg dpe'u ris skor Cycle of diagrams [for] the burnt offering
AUTHOR(s)	Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430) [?]
SUBJECT	sbyin sreg (DJTY=dbang, bskyed rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, T7v1 (515-520; incomplete)

ENTRY NO.	[=188 ?]
TITLE	Me long srid pa rang grol Self-liberation of the mirror of becoming
SUBJECT	ngo sprod, thos grol

REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 128
TITLE Smin grol rgyab rten dang bcas pa'i brgyud tshul gyi gsol 'debs byin rlabs bdud rtsi'i gru char
Rain of nectar: a supplication and blessing to the lineage together with the ripening and suporting [transmissions]
AUTHOR(s) Blo gros rab gsal zla ba dbyangs can [=Dil mgo mkhyen brtse, 1910-1991] [?]
SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE NE (3f, 5p)
COLOPHON (NE) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi smin grol brgyab brten dang bcas par mkhas btsun grub pa'i dbang phyug du mar brgyud pa'i srol ka ji snyed cig mchis pa las / 'dir rje gter chen bla ma yab sras khu dbon rnams dang grub dbang rdzogs chen pa skye sprul snga phyi brgyud 'dzin dang bcas pa'i mtshan gsal gyi brgyud tshul khyad par bdag 'don 'der bsdebs pa 'di yang / bshes gnyen dam pa byang sems chos kyi dbang po' gtsos mos ldan rnams kyi bshed skong du Blo gros rab gsal zla ba dbyangs can bdud di'i lang tsho'am / gzhan du zur sprul rgyal sras su grags pa'i rmongs rtul pa des 'phral mar bris te bul ba'o // bkra shis

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ENTRY NO. 129
TITLE Smin byed sgo 'byed dbang skur 'bring po 'gro drug rang grol la kha skong phyag bzhes kyis brgyan pa 'brel tshad rang grol
Self-liberation of whatever is encountered [which] has been embellished with the suplemental [texts] and customary practices for "the self-liberation of the six [classes of] beings: the intermediate initiation that opens the way for developing maturity"
AUTHOR(s) 'Jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas (1813-1899)
DATE/PLACE Rin chen brag, Bikoṭi [?]
SUBJECT dbang
REFERENCE B3 (51-115), PY (711-814), T7v2 (145-228), T8v2 (255-351)
COLOPHON (B3-115.4-6; PY-813.6-814.3; T8v2-350.6-351.2) lugs 'di'i yig rnying rigs cung nyog cing phyag len la ltos dgos pas mi gsal ba dang / mkhas pa rnams kyis bya sla'i gnas su dor bas rang 'dra'i dpe chog mkhan rnams pa phan du re nas / sangs rgyas padma'i snang brnyan kyis rjes su bzung ba'i dus zhabs kyi rnal 'byor pa Padma gar dbang blo gros mtha' yas pa'i sdes dpal de bikoṭ'i yang khrod rtsā 'dra rin chen brag gi sgrub gnas su sbyar ba dge legs 'phel
ch. T7 again

ENTRY NO. 130
TITLE Smon lam rdo rje'i rgya mdud
Vajra-knot prayer
AUTHOR(s) Rig 'dzin 'Gyur med rdo rje [=Gter bdag gling pa, 1646-1714]
SUBJECT smon lam
REFERENCE ZH (511-512)
COLOPHON (ZH-512.6) Rig pa 'dzin pa 'Gyur med rdo rjes so

ENTRY NO. 131
TITLE Rtsa gsum gtor bsngos lag len don bsdus snying po
Essential heart of the abbreviated meaning of the practice of the torma dedication to the three roots
SUBJECT gtor ma (DJTY=bstan srung)
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO.	132
TITLE	Rtsa gsum rab 'byams kyi bskang 'dus rin chen 'bar ba'i phreng ba Garland of blazing jewels: a compendium of expiation [rituals] of the immeasurable three roots
AUTHOR(s)	Kaḥ thog pa Tshe dbang nor bu (1698-1755)
DATE/PLACE	Gangs ri thod dkor [?], Central Tibet
SUBJECT	bskang bshags
REFERENCE	S3 (9f, 17p)
COLOPHON	(S3) de ltar rtsa gsum gyi spyi bskang 'di ni bod chen kaḥ thog lho rgyud du sku 'khrung pa Kun mkhyen chos rje Padma blo gros kyi rigs chos kyi rgyud 'dzin cing Seng ge'i khri 'srung mdzad / rje bla ma rdo rje 'dzin pa chen po skal bzang O rgyan bstan 'dzin zhal snga nas bgyid par yang yang bskul bar brten gzhi sngar gyi bskang rnying de la tshig tshogs mang tsam pa zhig gyis kyang dpe phyag tu 'bul ma thub par zag pas de phyir bla ma dam pa bde bar gshegs pa de'i dgongs pa bskang ba'i slad dang / sgrub mchod tshogs 'khor mtha' dag la 'jug cing khyer bde phyir / spyi bskang 'di 'dra min tsam gyi lugs srol bdun mthong ba las / 'di khrag 'thung bDud 'dul nas ldan rdo rje'i gsung lag gzhi blangs te / rdo rje theg pa'i rnal 'byor pa Tshe dbang nor bus bod yul dbu ru'i sa yi cha Kun mkhyen dri med 'od zer gyi bsti gnas sa la spyod pa'i 'og min kun tu bzang po'i pho brang gangs ri thod dkor du sbyar ba ste / de yis bla ma'i thugs dgongs yang dag par bskangs te dge legs tshogs rab tu 'phel bar gyur cig / rtsa gsum rab 'byams spyi bskang snying po 'di / sus kyang 'phri bsnan bsre slad ma phyed rar / nya stong dus drug tshogs gtor skabs la sogs / 'bad na rkyen sel dngos grub gnyis thob 'gyur / zhes pa'ang smras so

ENTRY NO.	133
TITLE	Tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug skabs su thog mar sku gsung thugs kyi dbang gsum bskur ba Conferring the body, speech, and mind initiations at the beginning of [the ritual of] "the six [classes of] beings, guiding the deceased [to a higher] state"
SUBJECT	dbang, gnas 'dren
REFERENCE	GK (839-842)

ENTRY NO.	134
TITLE	Tshe 'das gnas 'dren 'gro drug rang grol las nye bar bsdus pa sdug bsngal rang grol Self-liberation of suffering [which] has been fully compiled from "the self-liberation of the six [classes of] beings, guiding the deceased [to a higher] state"
AUTHOR(s)	Padma mati (1591-1637); patron 'Byor chung slob dpon spyos chung [?]
SUBJECT	gnas 'dren
REFERENCE	GK (971-1010)
COLOPHON	(GK-1010.3-4) sbyin bdag 'byor chung slob dpon spyos chung don / Padma mati'i rang bzhung dpang btsugs [sic] nas / legs par sbyar bas tshe 'das grol byed shog / dge'o

ENTRY NO.	135
TITLE	Tshe 'das gnas 'dren bsdus pa Digest of "guiding the deceased [to a higher] state"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678)
SUBJECT	gnas 'dren (DLSY [?]=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	DLSY [?], PY (553-583), S3 (16f, 31p), T5 (13f)
COLOPHON	(PY-583.5-6; T5) a rā gas bsdus pa la nyes pa gang mchis bshags shing dge bas sems can thams cad bde ba can du skye ba'i gyur cig

(S3) de ltar sprul pa'i gter chen Karma gling pa'i zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi las byang chung ba sogs 'don cha rnams dang / Karma chags med pas bsgrigs pa'i sngon 'gro / gnas 'dren bsdus pa bcas sngar par du 'khod skabs sngags rnams sgru gzhung dang bstun kyang bris brkos kyis nor 'khrul la zhu dag ma grub par / O rgyan rin po che'i bka' gter ma phal cher zur chag skad la mkhas grub yongs gyis mngon par bstong pa'i gnas de ltar sor bzhag ste / phyi mo dpe rnying khungs ldan dang bstun pa'i slar yang dag ther zhus pa'o

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ENTRY NO. [=135]
TITLE Tshe 'das gnas 'dren bsdus pa thugs rje'i lcags kyu
Digest of "guiding the deceased [to a higher] state" entitled "the iron-hook of compassion"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa; Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678)
SUBJECT gnas 'dren (DLSY [?]=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE S3 (16f, 31p)

ENTRY NO. 136
TITLE Dzapra dgongs bzlas tshad rang grol
Intent of recitation: self-liberation [through only] a measure of recitation
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE ZH (165-188)
COLOPHON (ZH-188.3-4) dzapra dgongs dmigs pa'i rim ba 'di ni Guru Padma'i gter kha gong 'og la brten nas legs par sbyar ba'i dge bas sems can tham cad zhi khro sku gsum dkyil 'khor du sangs rgyas par gyur cig / sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. 137
TITLE 'Dzab dgongs snying po rang grol
Self-liberated essential core of the recitation intent
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE PY (151-166), T5 (6f, 11p)

ENTRY NO. 138
TITLE 'Dzab bzlas tshangs pa'i sgra dbyangs 'khor 'das rang grol
Self-liberation of samsara and nirvana: the brahma sound melody recitation
AUTHOR(s) bDe ba ['Bad ?] bstan pa
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE CH (297-306), NE (4f), T5 (6f, 11p), T6 (205-218), T8v1 (203-211)
COLOPHON (NE; T6-218.2-3; T8v1-211.5-6) 'di ga'i bum bzlas [byin slobs, T6] sogs phal cher ni gTer bdag gling pa sogs rnying rgan rnams kyis gsang sngags bla med lugs phyag bzhes su mdzad pa ltar yod pas yid ches kyi gnas su nges par mdzod / 'dzab skor dang tshig cha shas 'di ban sprang bDe ba ['Bad ?] bstan pas bgyis pa'o // sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO. [=022]
TITLE Rdzogs chen dgongs pa rang grol la khro bos bar do'i gsal 'debs
Great perfection self-liberated wisdom: instructions for recollecting the bardo of wrathful deities
SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE WadB 87a (33f)

ENTRY NO. 139
TITLE Rdzogs chen 'khor 'das rang grol las btags grol bcangs thabs

	Technique of holding the liberation [through] wearing from "the self-liberation of samsara and nirvana, the great perfection"
SUBJECT	btags grol (DJTY=ngo sprod; TLSY [?]=rdzogs rim)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, T7v3 (307-313), TLSY

ENTRY NO.	[=048]
TITLE	Rdzogs chen dgongs pa rang grol las chos nyid bar do'i gsal 'debs Great perfection self-liberated wisdom: instructions for recollecting the bardo of reality
SUBJECT	ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE	WadB 87 (57f)

ENTRY NO.	[=097]
TITLE	Rdzogs chen dgongs pa rang grol las srid pa bar do'i gsal 'debs Great perfection self-liberated wisdom: instructions for recollecting the bardo of becoming
SUBJECT	ngo sprod, thos grol
REFERENCE	WadB 87b (56f)

ENTRY NO.	140
TITLE	Rdzogs pa chen po'i lo rgyus mdo byang po ti smug chung las 'chi bslu zab mo Profound death ransom from the small maroon volume of a scripture certificate on the history of the great perfection
AUTHOR(s)	Śrī Siṃha; Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	'chi bslu (DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)
REFERENCE	DLSY, KS (212.14-222), PLKC (4f), S1 (357-373), SGA (119-126), T7v3 (205-218), TLSY
COLOPHON	(KS-222.1-7; S1-373.4-6; T7v3-218.4-6) sngon bzhin ma song na : pan bdun nas nyi shu rtsa gcig gi lo grangs dang mnyam pas : the tshom med par bzlog pa yin na : 'chi ba bslu ba'i man ngag : slob dpon chen po Śrī Siṅghas mdzad pa : sems can sdug bsngal grol ba'i thabs rdzogs so : skal ldan las can gcig dang 'phrad par shog : samaya : rgya rgya rgya : Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

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ENTRY NO.	141
TITLE	Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig las nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol gyi dang po skye gnas bar do'i khrid yig kun gzhi rang grol First general topic of "experiential guiding instructions of the self-liberated wisdom-mind" [entitled] "the self-liberation of the all-ground: a guidebook to the bardo of birth"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (13f), T7v2 (303-340), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-339.6-340.2) kun gzhi rang par grol bas : skye gnas bar do'i khrid yig : kun gzhi rang grol zhes bya ba yin pas : de bzhin du shes par mdzad cig : de yan chad zhi gnas bsgrub cing : lhag mthong rig pa''i ye shes ngo sprod pa'i chos thun dang po'o : samaya
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998: 83-140

ENTRY NO.	142
TITLE	Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig dgongs pa rang grol gyi spyi don gnyis pa rmi lam bar do'i khrid yig 'khrul pa rang grol

	Second general topic of "the self-liberated wisdom" [entitled] "the self-liberation of deluded straying: a guidebook to the bardo of dreams"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (7f), T7v2 (341-361), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-361.4) bar do drug gi gal che ba'i khrid : 'od gsal gti mug rang grol zhes bya ba : samaya
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998, 141-168

ENTRY NO.	143
TITLE	Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig spyi don gsum pa bsam gtan bar do'i khrid yig rig pa rang grol Third general topic [entitled] "self-liberated awareness: a guidebook to the bardo of meditative concentration"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (5f), T7v2 (363-377), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-377.2-3) de la 'dir rab che 'dir bsam gtan bar dor ting nge 'dzin gyi zhen pa dang bral ste : grol lugs chen po bzhi ngo sprod : sangs rgyas par byed pa'i khrid : bsam gtan bar do'i khrid yig : rig pa rang grol zhes bya ba : samaya : rgya rgya rgya
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998: 169-193

ENTRY NO.	144
TITLE	Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig spyi don bzhi pa 'pho ba dran pa rang grol 'chi kha bar do'i gdams ngag Fourth general topic [entitled] "oral instructions on the bardo of dying, self-liberation [through] remembering the transference [practice]"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (7f), T7v2 (379-400), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-400.5-6) des na chos byas pa'i yon tan thams cad shi khar slebs pa cig dgos pas : shi ba la mkhas pa cig gal che'o : 'chi kha bar do'i khrid yig : 'pho ba dran pa rang grol zhes bya ba : samaya : rgya rgya rgya
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998: 195-233

ENTRY NO.	145
TITLE	Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig spyi don lnga pa chos nyid bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol Fifth general topic [entitled] "self-liberated vision: a guidebook to the bardo of reality"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (6f), T7v2 (401-417), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-417.3-6) de ltar snang ba bzhi'i 'char tshul bstan nas : de nas mtha' brten rjes kyi man ngag ni bzhi ste : mi 'gul ba gsum la gzhi bca' : stod pa gsum gyi tshad bzungs : thob pa gsum gyis gzer btab : gding bzhis mthar phyin par bya ste : rgyas par gzhan nas 'byung ngo : chos nyid bar do'i khrid yig mthong ba rang grol zhes bya ba samaya : rgya rgya rgya
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998: 235-255

ENTRY NO.	146
TITLE	Rdzogs rim bar do drug gi khrid yig spyi don drug pa srid pa bar do'i khrid yig srid pa rang grol Sixth general topic [entitled] "the self-liberation of becoming: a guidebook to the bardo of becoming"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	khrid (DJTY, TLSY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (5f), T7v2 (419-432), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v2-432.1-2) Grub thob Karma gling pas sgam po gdar gyi ri bo nas bton pa'o / gcig brgyud du byas nas / Guru Nyi zla 'od zer la zab chos 'di'i bdag por bka' babs pa'o / dge'o
TRANSLATION	Wallace 1998: 257-273

ENTRY NO.	147
TITLE	Zhi khro sgom rim chung ba lhan skyes rang grol Self-liberated coemergent [pristine wisdom]: the minor stages of cultivating the peaceful and wrathful
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	GK (697-700), T5 (1f), T8v1 (193-196)
COLOPHON	(GK-700.5; T5; T8v1-196.1) srin po'i dur dbyangs rgyun du bsgrangs : yi dam rang byung emaho : rdzogs chen snyan rgyud nas so

ENTRY NO.	148
TITLE	Zhi khro thugs kyi na rak don sprugs cho ga'i zin bris las khol du phyung ba Selection from the memorandum on the ritual of dreging the depths of hell of the exalted mind of the peaceful and wrathful deities
AUTHOR(s)	Rāgasya Karma chags med (1613-1678)
SUBJECT	dong sprugs
REFERENCE	GK (371-382)

ENTRY NO.	149
TITLE	Zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol Self-liberation of feeling: a garland of principal practice manuals gathering the peaceful and wrathful deities
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa; Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs (DJTY, ZDTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	CH (85-238), DJTY, DLSY, GK (75-144; 453-491), NE (41f, 81p), PLKC (28f), PY (61-150; 351-356), T5 (62f, 123p), T6 (61-177), T7v1 (233-325), T8v1 (59-161), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (33-130)
COLOPHON	(CH-236.5-237.3; GK-491.4-6; NE; T5; T6-176.7-177.3; T7v1-325.3-6; T8v1-161.4-6; ZH-129.5-130.1) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las : zhi khro 'dus pa'i las byang rtsar phreng tshor ba rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar bar : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du chos 'di ma rdzogs so : skal ldan las 'phro can dang 'phrad par shog : 'phrad nas 'gro ba ma lus 'dren par shog : samayā : rgya rgya rgya : Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma : Suryacandrarasmi'i la bka' babs pa'i zab chos lags so : sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	150
TITLE	Zhi khro na rag bskang bshags las bram ze dung phreng can gyi lo rgyus zur tsam Part of the story of the brahmin [named] garland conch from "the peaceful and wrathful, [avoiding] hell [through] expiation and confession"
DATE/PLACE	Gang gar sgang [?]
SUBJECT	lo rgyus, bskang bshags
REFERENCE	CH (553-560), DJTY, NE (2f), T7v1 (15-20)
COLOPHON	(CH-559.5; NE) gang gar [gangs ra, NE] sgang gi ri khrod du sbyar bas 'gro rnams smin grol gyi lam la 'god bar gyur cig

ENTRY NO.	151
TITLE	Zhi khro 'bring po'i lugs kyi khā hi Khā hi of the intermediate tradition of the peaceful and wrathful deities [?]
AUTHOR(s)	Chos 'byung [=He pa chos 'byung ?]
SUBJECT	gsol 'debs, sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	GK (267-273)

ENTRY NO.	[=176]
TITLE	Zhi khro rigs brgya 'dus pa'i las byang tshor ba rang grol gyi snying po Essential core of "the self-liberation of feeling: a practice manual gathering the one hundred peaceful and wrathful [deities of the five buddha] families"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	GK (509-517), NE (14f), ZH (135-162)

ENTRY NO.	152
TITLE	Zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol Self-liberation of speech: confession to the expanse of the peaceful and wrathful deities
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs, bskang bshags (DJTY, ZDTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	B1 (24f, 47p), B1a (349-395), B2 (31b.5-43b.3), B4 (24f, 47p), B5 (18f), BL 3284 (24f), BL 3445 (24f), CH (371-422), CM, DH (491-537), DJTY, DLSY, GK (383-422), JVM, KS (168.11-192), NE (16f), PLKC (10f), PY (265-303), RB (28f), S1 (282-324), S3 (17f, 33p), T3 (21f, 41p), T5 (23f), T6 (254-293), T7v1 (397-429), T8v1 (291-328), TLSY, WadB 84d (22f), ZDTY, ZH (297-332)
COLOPHON	(B1; B1a-394.5-395.3; B4; DH-536.5-537.3; T3) bskong bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha rkyen du : zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol ston : 'di la brtson par gyis shig phyi rabs bu : ma 'ongs las 'phro can dang 'phrad par shog : zhi khro don gyi bshags pa klong bshags brjod pa rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan kyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi : dri med bshags pa'i rgyud nas bkol ba : ji srid 'khor ba 'jig rten ma stongs bar du ni : de srid dam pa'i chos 'di ma rdzogs so // dge legs 'phel

(B5; CH-421.2-4; GK-421.4-422.1; KS-191.8-16; NE; PY-302.6-303.3; S1-323.3-324.1; S3; T5; T6-292.5-293.2; T7v1-429.1-4; T8v1-328.1-4; ZH-332.4-6) sk(o)ang bshags nyams chags rang grol gyi cha rkyen du : zhi khro'i klong bshags brjod pa rang grol (b)sto(a)n : 'di la brtson par gyis shig phyi rabs bu : ma 'ongs las 'phro can dang 'phrad par shog : zhi khro don gyi bshags pa klong bshags brjod pa rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis : dri med bshags pa'i rgyud nas bkol ba : ji srid 'khor ba 'jig rten ma stongs bar : de srid dam pa'i chos 'di ma rdzogs so : samayā : rgya rgya rgya : gter rgya : sbas rgya : gtad rgya : Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o / sarvamaṅgalaṃ
(WadB 84d-22b) zhi khro don gyi bshags ba klong bshags brjod pa rang grol zhes bya ba : gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi : dri med bshags pa'i rgyud nas bkol : ji srid 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ni : de srid dam pa'i chos 'di ma rdzogs so : samayā

ENTRY NO.	[=009]
TITLE	Zhi khro'i bka' srung sde bdun gyi phrin las Enlightened activities of the seven classes of peaceful and wrathful oath-bound protectors
SUBJECT	bstan srung
REFERENCE	PLKC (3f)

ENTRY NO.	153
TITLE	Zhi khro'i skong bshags nyams chag rang grol gyi cha rkyen gyi bskang bsdus Compendium of expiation [rituals] that are required for "the self-liberation of broken vows [through] expiation and confession of the peaceful and wrathful"
AUTHOR(s)	Blo gros rgyal mtshan
SUBJECT	bskang bshags
REFERENCE	PY (463-485), T5 (9f)
COLOPHON	(PY-485.3-4; T5) zhi khro'i bskang bshags bsdus pa rang gzhan la phan phyir bandhe Blo gros rgyal mtshan gyis so // dge'o

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ENTRY NO.	154
TITLE	Zhi khro'i sgo nas phung po sreg sbyong bya ba'i lag len Rubrics of "the purification ritual of cremating the corpse" in terms of the peaceful and wrathful
AUTHOR(s)	Padma nor bu (1679-1757)
SUBJECT	ro sreg
REFERENCE	PY (821-846), T5 (15f), T8v2 (397-417)
COLOPHON	(T5) 'di ni gzhung dang bla ma'i gsung rnams las / nyer mkho'i khyer bde bris pa dge gyur cig maṅgalam / Padma norbu'o

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ENTRY NO.	[=049]
TITLE	Zhi khro'i chos spyod bag chags rang grol Religious liturgy of the peaceful and wrathful deities, the self-liberation of karmic latencies
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	BL 3314 (32f)

ENTRY NO.	155
TITLE	Zhi khro'i bdag bskyed mdor bsdus dgongs pa rang grol

	Self-liberated wisdom: a digest of the peaceful and wrathful self-generation
AUTHOR(s)	Padma mati (1591-1637)
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs, bdag bskyed
REFERENCE	B3 (27-29)
COLOPHON	(B3-29.3-4) zhi khro'i bdag bskyed mdor bsdus 'di / rdzogs chen don la blo phyogs pa'i / Padma matis bris pa 'di'i / dge bas kun bzang klong gro'ang shog / bkra shis par gyur cig / sarvamaṅgalaṃ / dge'o

ENTRY NO.	156
TITLE	Zhi khro'i mdun bskyed shin tu bsdus pa snod bcud rang grol Self-liberation of the vessel and its contents: a greatly abbreviated [practice] of the peaceful and wrathful front-generation
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs, mdun bskyed
REFERENCE	T5 (3f, 5p), T8v1 (197-201)

ENTRY NO.	157
TITLE	Zhi khro'i phyag 'tshal bsdus pa Digest of the peaceful and wrathful prostrations
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	phyag 'tshal (DJTY=bskyed rim; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	CH (365-370), DJTY, NE (3f, 5p), PY (441-447) [?], T7v1 (391-396), T8v1 (275-282), TLSY, ZH (291-294)
COLOPHON	(ZH-294.4-6) 'di ni thos grol gyi bka' babs chos bdag Nyi zla 'od zer gyis bskang bshags lag len dmar khrid las / phyag 'tshal bsdus pa chos rnams rnam dag ces sogs nas dam can rgya mtsho'i tshogs kyi bar phyag 'tshal gsang pa'i kha 'phangs bud pa'o / zhes pa'i yig chung kaḥ thog par rnying las bshus pa lags / sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	158
TITLE	Zhi khro'i las byang mchod pa'i skabs su mtshan sngags khā hi bsdus pa [=Sman mchod bsdus pa] Digest of name-mantras and khāhi [used] when making offerings: a practice manual of the peaceful and wrathful deities [=Digest of medicine offerings]
AUTHOR(s)	Dharma senge
SUBJECT	gsol 'debs, sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	T5 (3f, 5p), T8v1 (165-171)
COLOPHON	(T5; T8v1-171.4) zhes pa'ang 'jug pa bde phyir Dharma senges so // dge'o / bkra shis

ENTRY NO.	159
TITLE	Zhi khro'i las byang rtsar phreng gi sman rag gtor gsum gyi skabs su kha 'phang lhan thabs Explanatory suplement to "the garland of principal practice manuals gathering the peaceful and wrathful deities" [to be used] at the time of the three-fold [offering of] medicine, rakta, and torma
AUTHOR(s)	Padma mati (1591-1637)
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs, smon lam
REFERENCE	GK (147-157)

ENTRY NO.	160 [=094 ?]
TITLE	Zhi khro'i las byang shin tu mdor bsdus pa gtor sgrub rang grol snying po

Essential heart of the self-liberated accomplishment torma: an extremely abbreviated digest of the practice manual of the peaceful and wrathful deities
SUBJECT gtor ma (DJTY=bskyed rim)
REFERENCE DJTY

ENTRY NO. 161
TITLE Zhi ba'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i dpe'u ris
Diagrams for chanting separately the peaceful burnt offering
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DJTY=dbang, bskyed rim)
REFERENCE DJTY, PLKC (2f), T7v1 (501-505)

ENTRY NO. 162
TITLE Zhi ba'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i yig chung
Short notes for presenting separately the peaceful burnt offering
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
DATE/PLACE lug lo, 6th month; Sman mo bkra shis dgon
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE DLSY, T7v2 (51-72)
COLOPHON (T7v2-71.6-72.1) zhi ba'i sbyin bsreg gud du ston pa'i yig chung 'di nyid lug lo zla ba drug pa'i nyer cig la sman mo bkra shis dgon gyi yang dben du Rgya btsun Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bris ba'o

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ENTRY NO. 163
TITLE Zhing khams lnga'i smon lam thong bar rang grol
Self-liberated vision: a prayer to the five pure lands
SUBJECT smon lam
REFERENCE BL 2200 (4f)

ENTRY NO. 164
TITLE Gzhi'i 'od gsal gyi dpe ris
Diagrams of the fundamental clear light
SUBJECT ngo sprod
REFERENCE PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. 165
TITLE Bzhu(ng)gs bzang bad tshul 'byed pa'i bsnyen yig dri bzang ngad ldan kun tu bzang po'i zhal ngo
Face of fragrant perfumed kuntu zangpo: a recitation manual for one who endeavors to be good [a scripture of "the self-liberated wisdom of the peaceful and wrathful deities"]
AUTHOR(s) Zur chen Chos dbyings rang grol (1604-1669); requested by Sangs rgyas chos 'phel; distributed by Kun bzang gzhan phan mtha' yas (b. 1800)
SUBJECT bsnyen sgrub
REFERENCE NE (17f)

COLOPHON	(NE) zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi gzhung bzang bad tshal 'byed pa'i bsnyen yig dri bzang ngad ldan kun tu bzang po'i zhal ngo ma zhes bya ba 'di nyd mam 'dren bla ma dam pa Sangs rgyas chos 'phel gyis bskul ngor zur chen Chos dbyings rang grol gyis mdzad pa'i bsnyen yig gzhir bzhag ste rigs mthun 'ga' las kyang bsdur bzhin spel ba'i byed po Kun bzang gzhan phan gyis bgyis pa'i gde bas 'gro mams sku gsum rgyal ba'i go 'phang thob pa'i rgyur gyur cig // dge legs 'phel // bkra shis // dge'o // sarvamangalam // zab chos dgongs pa rang grol bsnyen pa'i thabs / tshe 'das a ni skal bzang de nyid ched / bla dkar gyis bskrun chos sbyin 'dras med dge / 'gro khams ma zad bar du don byes shog

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ENTRY NO.	166
TITLE	Zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol dang thugs rje chen po padma zhi khro las lung bstan bka' rgya Revelation prophecy and authorizing order of "the profound doctrine of the self-liberated wisdom of the peaceful and wrathful" and "the great compassionate one, the peaceful and wrathful lotus"
SUBJECT	lo rgyus (DJTY=bstan srung)
REFERENCE	DJTY, T7v1 (521-536; incomplete)
TRANSLATION	Cuevas

ENTRY NO.	167
TITLE	Zab gsang rdzogs pa chen po mkha' 'gro snying thig btags grol Liberation [through] wearing [according to] "the ḍākiṇī's heart-drop": a profound secret [teaching of] the great perfection
SUBJECT	btags grol
REFERENCE	B2 (97a.4-105b.4)

ENTRY NO.	168
TITLE	'Og sgo bde chen 'dod chags rang grol gyis nyams khrid gud du bkol ba don bsdus zab khrid bde ba rang grol Self-liberation of bliss: profound guiding instructions on engaging separately the experiential guiding instructions by way of "the self-liberation of desire: guiding instructions on the great bliss of the lower orifice"
AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandrarasmi, b. 1409/21]; requested by Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE	sprel lo [=1452/64], monkey month; Thang 'brog dgon, Kong po
SUBJECT	thabs lam (ZDTY=ngo sprod)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY, T7v3 (439-481), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v3-480.5-481.4) zab lam rdzogs rim nyams khrid bde ba rang grol zhes bya ba / guru'i gdams pa mudra nyid kyis bskul ba'i don du snyigs ma'i ku sa li Suryacandrarasmi'i ming can gyis kong yul lta bar thang 'brog dgon pa tu sprel lo phag gi zla ba'i dus bzang la 'di brtsam pa'i dge bas 'gro kun sku gsum bde ba chen po myur du thob bar gyur cig / 'gal 'brel zlos skyon ma brtogs lu col bris / 'di la mkhas mams bjod pa mdzad par zhu / bde chen lhan skyes kyis nyams rtogs phul phyin pa'i Rje btsun Suryacandra'i drung du Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos zhus de la Kaḥ thog pa Nam mkha' seng ges zhus / de la bdag gis zhus so / gsang ngags rdo rje theg pa 'di bka' btsan zhing byin che ba dang dar zhing rgyas nas 'gro mams kun bzang bla med kyis sa la 'god par gyur cig

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ENTRY NO.	169
TITLE	'Og sgo bde ba chen po'i khrid 'dod chags rang grol Self-liberation of desire: guiding instructions on the great bliss of the lower orifice

AUTHOR(s)	Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sûryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]
SUBJECT	thabs lam (ZDTY=ngo sprod)
REFERENCE	DJTY, DLSY [?], T7v3 (329-419), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(T7v3-417.3-419.6) Appended: short history of Karma gling pa's revelation of the treasure cycle and instructions for its transmission given to Nyi zla chos rje

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ENTRY NO.	170
TITLE	O rgyan rin po che'i gter ston lung bstan dang khung btsun pa bla ma brgyud pa'i rim pa rnams Precious one from orgyan's prophecy of the treasure revealer and the series of the authentic lineage lamas
AUTHOR(s)	Chos rje Dge 'dun rgyal mtshan [=Saṁghagetu, b. 1446]
DATE/PLACE	phag lo [=1503/15], first half of the last month of autumn; Chanda nags
SUBJECT	lo rgyus
REFERENCE	T7v1 (21-26)
COLOPHON	(T7v1-26.4-6) bar do thos grol chos kyi cha rkyen du : bka' brgyud bla ma'i rnam thar mdor bsdus 'di : drin chen Saṃ ga'i mtshan can gyis : thugs dgongs rdzogs phyir Dge 'dun rgyal mtshan gyis : phag lo ston zla tha chung yar ngo la : Chanda nags kyi khrod du bris pa'o : nyes pa ci mchis gong ma rdzogs la bshags : dge ba'i rtsa ba sems can don phyir bsngo : maṅgalaṃ
TRANSLATION	Back 1987: 16-17 (excerpt); Cuevas

ENTRY NO.	171
TITLE	Rigs drug gnas 'dren bsdus pa Digest of "guiding the six classes [of beings to a higher] state"
AUTHOR(s)	Padma rig 'dzin (1625-1697)
SUBJECT	gnas 'dren
REFERENCE	CH (709-728), NE (7f), T5 (9f), T6 (483-502), T8v2 (443-460)
COLOPHON	(NE; T5; T6-502.5-6; T8v2-460.3-5) de ltar dgongs pa rang grol gshin chog don / mang las nyung dur bsgrigs chags bsdus pa ste / blo dman rnams dang spros med rnal 'byor pa / gang zhig dgos pa rnams kyi don ched du / rdzogs chen rnal 'byor Padma rig 'dzin gyis / bkod pa'i dge 'dis 'khor ba dong sprugs shog // sarvamaṅgalaṃ

ENTRY NO.	172
TITLE	Rig pa ngo sprod gcer mthong rang grol Self-liberated naked vision: a direct introduction to awareness
AUTHOR(s)	Padmasambhava; Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)
REFERENCE	B1 (15f), B1a (367-426), B4 (15f), BL 688 (7f), BL 3279 (15f), BL 3317 (26f), BL 3441 (18f), CM, DH (373-402), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, PLKC (6f), RB (17f), SGA (127-136a), T3 (13f, 25p), T7v2 (479-488), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON	(B1; B1a-426.2-3; B4; DH-402.2-3; T3) rig pa mngon sum ngo sprod pa'i bstan bcos : gcer mthong rang grol zhes bya ba : O rgyan mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi sbyar ba : 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so (SGA) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba (T7v2-488.5-6; RB) rig pa mngon sum ngo sprod pa'i bstan chos : gcer mthong rang grol zhes bya ba O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba rdzogs so : rgya rgya rgya : Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o
TRANSLATION	Evans-Wentz 1968: 202-240; Back 1987: 38-77; Reynolds 1989: 9-28; Thurman 1994: 227-242

ENTRY NO.	173
TITLE	Ro sreg gi cho ga ye shes 'od 'bar Blazing light of pristine wisdom: a cremation ritual
AUTHOR(s)	Kāmala mati
DATE/PLACE	Gha dkar po
SUBJECT	ro sreg
REFERENCE	NE (14f, 27p)
COLOPHON	(NE) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi sgo nas ro sreg gi cho ga ye shes 'od 'bar zhes bya ba 'di zhi khro'i lha la mos pa lam du byed pa'i bandhe Kamala matis dben gnas su gha dkar por bris pa dge'o

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ENTRY NO.	174
TITLE	Las bum sgrub pa'i cho ga dag byed chu rgyun River of the purified ritual for consecrating the action vase
SUBJECT	dbang
REFERENCE	GK (307-312), T5 (3f), ZH (193-197)

ENTRY NO.	175
TITLE	Las byang gi sngon 'gro'i rim pa Preliminary stages of the practice
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	PLKC (6f)

ENTRY NO.	176
TITLE	Las byang chung ba tshor ba rang grol snying po Essential core of "the self-liberation of feeling: a minor practice manual"
AUTHOR(s)	Karma gling pa
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs (DJTY, ZDTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE	B3 (3-23), CH (239-284), DJTY, DLSY, GK (243-265, 509-517), NE (14f), PLKC (8f), PY (417-440, 451-461), S3 (16f, 31p), T5 (18f, 35p), T6 (179-204, 353-361), T7v1 (327-353), T8v2 (5-38), TLSY, ZDTY, ZH (135-161)
COLOPHON	(B3-23.2; CH-283.4-5; GK-517.3; NE; T5; T7v1-352.6; T8v2-37.6-38.1; ZH-161.6) Grub thob Karma gling pa'i gter ma'o

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ENTRY NO.	[=151 ?]
TITLE	Las byang mchod bstod skabs lag len bsdus pa Digest of practices [used] when making offerings and praises: a practice manual
AUTHOR(s)	Chos 'byung [=He pa chos 'byung ?]
SUBJECT	gsol 'debs, sgrub thabs
REFERENCE	GK (267-273)

ENTRY NO.	177
TITLE	Las byang rnams kyi sngon du 'gro ba Liturgical preliminaries
AUTHOR(s)	Padma vidyādhara [=Padma rig 'dzin, 1625-1697]
SUBJECT	sgrub thabs, sngon 'gro
REFERENCE	ZH (27-32)

COLOPHON (ZH-32.5) oṃ sumbha ni sogs kyis bgegs bskrad thun gyis brab bo / de nas srung 'khor bsgom / dngos gzhi'i cho ga la 'jug go / zhes pa'ang Padma vidyadharas sbyar ba'o

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ENTRY NO. 178
TITLE Las bzhi spyi bye brag gi yig chung (ste lnga)
Short notes on the general and specific details of the four activities (in five sections)
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DJTY=bskyed rim; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE DJTY, TLSY

ENTRY NO. 179
TITLE Las bzhi so so dang spyi'i sbyin sreg gud du bton pa'i dpe'u ris
Diagrams for chanting separately the burnt offering of the individual and general four activities
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DJTY=dbang, bskyed rim; DLSY=smin byed dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, T7v1 (511-514)

ENTRY NO. 180
TITLE Las bzhi'i sbyin sreg so so'i yig chung
Short notes on the individual burnt offering of the four activities
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)
SUBJECT sbyin sreg (DJTY=bskyed rim; TLSY=dbang sgrub)
REFERENCE DJTY, TLSY, ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 181
TITLE Shel nyi ma 'dra 'bag gsum la brten nas sku gsum ngo sprod
Direct introduction to the three embodiments based on the three masks of the crystal moon
AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE DLSY, TLSY

ENTRY NO. 182
TITLE Shel rdo ngo sprod mthong ba rang grol zhes bya ba bar do thos grol gyi cha lag
Self-liberated vision: a direct introduction to the crystal: an auxiliary [practice] of "the liberation upon hearing in the bardo"
AUTHOR(s) Karma gling pa [DLSY-89.6-90.1=Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho]
SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (3f), T7v3 (21-28), TLSY
COLOPHON (T7v3-28.1-2) shel rdo ngo sprod zhes bya ba Padma bdag gis rin chen gter du sbas : gter ston Karma gling pas : sgom po gdar gyi ri bo nas bton pa'i gter ma lags so

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ENTRY NO. 183
TITLE Gshin po rjes 'dzin gnas 'dren bsdus pa
Digest of [the rituals for] taking care of the dead and guiding them [to a higher] state
AUTHOR(s) Padma vidyādhara [=Padma rig 'dzin, 1625-1697]

SUBJECT gnas 'dren
REFERENCE ZH (463-482)
COLOPHON (ZH-482.1-2) de ltar dgongs pa rang grol gyi gshin chog gzhung don mnyams par nyung dur bsgrigs chags su bsdus pa 'di ni / blo dman rnams dang spros med rnal 'byor pa gang gi ched du / rdzogs pa chen po'i rnal 'byor pa Padma vidyādharas bkod pa'i dge bas 'khor ba dong nas sprugs par gyur cig

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ENTRY NO. 184
TITLE Sa bcad lde mig rang grol
Self-liberated key: a topical outline [of "the profound doctrine of the self-liberated wisdom mind: the experiential instructions"]
AUTHOR(s) Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]; requested by Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b. 1430)
DATE/PLACE sprel lo [=1452, 1464], 8th month, 13th day; Thang 'brog dgon, Kong po
SUBJECT sa bcad, khrid (DJTY, ZDTY=rdzogs rim; DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim, thabs lam)
REFERENCE DJTY, DLSY, PLKC (4f), T7v2 (255-265), TLSY, ZDTY
COLOPHON (T7v2-264.6-265.2) zab chos nyams khrid dgongs pa rang grol gyi sa bcad lde mig rang grol zhes bya ba : 'khor ba ma stong bar du ma rdzogs so : zab chos 'di dang 'phrad nas ni : 'khor bar 'jug pa ga la srid : sprel lo zla ba brgyad pa'i bcu gsum la : kong yul thang 'brog dgon pa'i gzim khang du : bla ma Nam mkha'i ming can gyis bskul nas : ban chung Nyi zla'i ming can kho bos sbyar ba rdzogs so : zab yod
TRANSLATION Cuevas

ENTRY NO. 185
TITLE Sāccha 'debs pa'i gsal byed legs tshogs lhun grub
Spontaneous good tidings: a clarification of [the technique] of casting tsha-tsha
AUTHOR(s) Zahor Bande [=Dalai Lama V, 1617-1682]
SUBJECT gtor ma
REFERENCE NE (3f)
COLOPHON (NE) sngags 'di brjod pas kyang rab tu gnas pa'i tshad do / de ltar sāccha 'debs pa'i lag len gyi / rim pa legs tshogs lhun 'grub ces bya 'di / rang gzhan man por phan 'dod lhag bsam gyis / bskrun 'dod blo yi zhing sa gshin po la / nye char grong smad 'phrin las gyur tshe yis / bskul tshig sa bon yi ge'i drong gsher las / don bzang myu gu g.yur du zar pa'i 'bras / stsol pa'i byed po Za hor bande'o

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ENTRY NO. 186
TITLE Sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mda' sbran pa'i smon lam
Prayer requesting the buddhas and bodhisattvas for assistance
AUTHOR(s) Padmasambhava; Ye shes mtsho rgyal; Karma gling pa
DATE/PLACE Dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo
SUBJECT smon lam (DJTY=ngo sprod; DLSY=thos grol)
REFERENCE B1 (3f, 5p), B1a (123-127), B2 (43b.3-44b.1), B4 (3f, 5p), B5 (3f, 5p), BL 684 (7f), BL 2203 (3f), CM, DH (173-177), DJTY, DLSY, GK (229-233), JVM, KS (111-113.5), NE (3f), PY (338.4-341.2), RB (2f, 3p), S1 (213-218.4), SGA, T3 (3f, 5p), T4 (47a.5-50.1), T5 (10f), T6 (399-403), T7v1 (197.6-200); T7v3 (315-327), WadB 84h (3f), WadB 84l-1 (3f), ZH (389-400)

COLOPHON (B1; B1a-127.3-5; B4; DH-177.3-5; T3) mos gus drag pos sgo nas : bdag gzhan thams cad kyis lan gsum bya'o : de nas bar do thos grol dang 'phrang sgrol 'jigs skyob ma'i smon lam btab par bya'o : sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mdar sbran pa'i smon lam rdzogs so : samaya rgya rgya rgya
(GK-233.3-4) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba : mTsho rgyal gyi zin ris su bris nas Karma gling pas sgam po dpal gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o
(KS-113.3-5) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis mdzad de : mTsho rgyal gyi zin ris su bris nas gter du sbas : slar Karma gling pas sgam po dpal gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o
(PY-350.1-2) O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyi mdzad pa : 'khor ba ma stongs bar du ma rdzogs so : samayā : Grub thob Karma gling pas dwags lha sgam po dpal gyi ri bo gsang gdan drangs pa'o
(NE; T5; T6-403.3-6) mos gus drag pos sgo nas bdag gzhan thams cad kyis lan gsum bya'o : de nas bar do thos grol dang : bar do 'phrang sgrol dang : 'jigs skyob ma'i smon lam btab par bya'o : sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams la ra mdar sbran pa'i smon lam 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du ma rdzogs so : samaya : zhes O rgyan gyi mkhan po Padma 'byung gnas kyis sbyar ba : mTsho rgyal gyis zin bris su bris nas Karma gling pas sgam po dpal gyi ri bo nas gdan drangs pa'o
(WadB 84b-2b-3a) sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnam shes bya ra 'dar sbran pa'i smon lam 'khor ba ma stongs kyi bar du ma : samayā : śubham : ithi : 'di bris dge ba'i rtsa bas pha ma sems can thams cad rnam mkhyen rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas myur thob shog :: dge'o

TRANSLATION Evans-Wentz 1960: 197-198; Fremantle and Trungpa 1975: 96-97; Thurman 1994: 105-107; Wallace 1998: 296-297

ENTRY NO. 187

TITLE Srid pa bar do'i khyad par nyi shu bstan pa
Teaching on twenty special qualities of the bardo of becoming

SUBJECT ngo sprod, thos grol

REFERENCE DLSY, PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. 188

TITLE Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa srid pa bar do rang grol
Self-liberation of the bardo of becoming: instructions on "the presentation of the natural form of virtue and vice in the bardo of becoming"

AUTHOR(s) Padmasambhava [calligrapher, T3=Don grub bkra shis]

SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)

REFERENCE B1 (18f, 35p), B1a (499-533), B4 (18f, 35p), BL 3280 (18f), CM, DH (403-437), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, PLKC (2f), T3 (17f, 33p), ZDTY

COLOPHON (B1-188.2-5; B1a-533.2-5; B4; DH-437.2-5) e ma bdag 'dra Padma 'byung gnas kyis : dmyal gnas dngos su mthong nas ni : ma 'ongs sems can rnams la phan phyir du : bar do thos grol chos kyi cha rkyen sdebs : skyes bu las can cig dang 'phrad par shog : dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa : srid pa rang grol zhes bya ba rdzogs so
(T3) e ma bdag 'dra Padma 'byung gnas kyis : dmyal gnas dngos su mthong nas ni : ma 'ongs sems can rnams la phan phyir du : bar do thos grol chos kyi cha rkyen sdebs : skyes bu las can cig dang 'phrad par shog : dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i gdams pa : srid pa rang grol zhes bya ba rdzogs so :: oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ hri : mgon po 'od dpag med la phyag 'tshal lo / sangs rgyas tshe dpag med la phyag 'tshal lo / oṃ amideva padme hri : bde ba can du skye bar byin gyis rlabs / oṃ āḥ hūṃ vajra guru padma siddhi hūṃ / oṃ vajras tva hūṃ / sug bris pa ni zangs dkar pi shu pa Don grub bkra shis yin zhu

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ENTRY NO. 189

TITLE Srid pa bar do'i dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs [=srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod kyi lhan thabs dbyangs snyan lha'i gaṇdhe]

Supplement to "the presentation of the natural form of virtue and vice in the bardo of becoming" [=the gandharva's divine melodious song: a suplement to "the direct introduction to the bardo of becoming"]

AUTHOR(s) Rgya ra ba Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtsho (b.1430)

DATE/PLACE lug lo, 9th month, 3rd day; Sangs rgyas rin po che'i bsgrub gnas yang dben [?]

SUBJECT ngo sprod (DLSY=thos grol)

REFERENCE B1 (8f, 15p), B1a (535-549), B4 (8f, 15p), BL 3281 (8f), BL 3442 (8f), CM, DH (439-453), DJTY, DLSY, JVM, PLKC (7f), T3 (7f, 13p), T7v3 (163-173, alt. title), WadB 84j (5f, alt. title)

COLOPHON (B1-196.4-5; B1a-549.4-5; B4; DH-453.4-5; T3) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol las : srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs lha'i gandhe zhes bya ba 'di : 'gro kun kun bzang gi sa la 'god pa 'gyur cig :: mangalam
(T7v3-172.5-173.2) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi / srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs / dbyangs snyan lha'i gandhe zhes bya ba 'di nyid lug lo zla ba / dgu ba'i yar tshes gsum la / sangs rgyas rin po che'i bsgrub gnas kyi mdun ngos / kla klo 'gyu ba'i sa cha / mkhar la stong gi yang dben na / dus mtha'i Rgya btsun Nam mkha' chos kyi rgya mtshos bris pa'i / dge bas 'gro kung thams cad kun bzang gi go 'phang la 'khod pa gyur cig
(WadB 84j-5b) zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyis srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod dge sdig rang gzugs bstan pa'i lhan thabs lha'i gandhe zhes bya ba rdzogs so : dge'o

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ENTRY NO. [=097]

TITLE Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod gsal 'debs thos grol chen mo
Great liberation upon hearing: instructions for recollecting the direct introduction to the bardo of becoming

SUBJECT ngo sprod, gsal 'debs, thos grol

REFERENCE PLKC (7f), RB (42f), S1 (107-172), ZDTY

ENTRY NO. 190

TITLE Srid pa bar do'i ngo sprod lhan thabs smon lam
Prayer suplement to the direct introduction to the bardo of becoming

SUBJECT smon lam, ngo sprod, thos grol

REFERENCE TLSY

ENTRY NO. 191

TITLE Gsangs sngags rdo rje theg pa'i chos spyod thun bzhi'i rnal 'byor sems nyid rang grol
Self-liberation of the mind-itself: a four session yoga of religious practice of the secret mantra vajra vehicle

AUTHOR(s) Nyi zla 'od zer [=Sūryacandraraśmi, b. 1409/21]

SUBJECT sngon 'gro (DJTY=bskyed rim; DLSY=thos grol; TLSY=rdzogs rim)

REFERENCE CH (1-22), DJTY, DLSY, PY (1-20), T5 (11f), T6 (9-27), T7v1 (201-216), T8v1 (1-20), TLSY, ZH (1-16)

COLOPHON (CH-22.2-3; PY-20.3-4; T5; T6-27.6-7; T7v1-216.2-3; T8v1-20.1-2; ZH-16.1-2) 'de dag zab chos zhi khro dgongs pa rang grol gyi sngon 'gro rang rgyud sbyong byed kyi lhan thabs la sbyar yang rung zhing / bla med theg pa chen po'i chos spyod gter ston Karma gling pa'i sras kyi thu bo Chos rje gling pa'i zhal gdams Guru Suryacandrarasmis yi ger bkod pa'o / sarvamangalam

TRANSLATION Wallace 1998: 53-79

ENTRY NO. 192
TITLE Gsang sngags spyi'i mchod gtor byin gyis brlabs pa'i rim pa mdzad med bdud rtsi'i rgya mtsho
Ocean of nectar without activity: the stages of offering torma and blessings of the general secret mantra
SUBJECT gtor ma
REFERENCE T6 (41-44)

ENTRY NO. 193
TITLE Gsang sngags me gsur
Secret mantra burnt offering
SUBJECT sbyin sreg
REFERENCE PY (699-710)

ENTRY NO. [=012]
TITLE Gsol 'debs sku gsum klong yangs rang grol
Self-liberation of the vast expanse, supplication to the three embodiments
SUBJECT gsol 'debs
REFERENCE PLKC

ENTRY NO. 194
TITLE Lho sgo'i cho ga rigs drug gnas 'dren gyi dpe ris
Diagrams for the southern gate ritual of guidance [through] the six realms
SUBJECT gnas 'dren
REFERENCE PLKC (2f)

ENTRY NO. 195
TITLE A ma mdo le ma'i gtam rgyud
Fables of Ama Dolema [?]
SUBJECT gtam rgyud
REFERENCE ZDTY

Bibliography

1. Tibetan Sources and Abbreviations

NOTE: The following Tibetan language sources are arranged in alphabetical order according to the abbreviations used in the footnotes. All references and abbreviations to editions of Karma-gling-pa's *Zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol* are listed in Appendix 3.

BDGR Bstan-'dzin-padma'i-rgyal-mtshan, Che-tshang Sprul-sku IV, *'Bri-gung gdan-rabs gser-phreng [=Nges-don bstan-pa'i snying-po mgon-po 'bri-gung-pa chen-po'i gdan-rabs chos-kyi byung-tshul gser-gyi phreng-ba]*. Lhasa: Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-rnying dpe-skrun-khang, 1989.

BDLC Mtshur-ston Dbang-nge (Dbang-gi-rdo-rje), *Bar-do blos-chod-kyi man-ngag* of *Rje-btsun lho-brag-pa'i khyad-par-gyi gdams-pa snyan-gyi shog-dril bzhi'i lo-rgyus gzhung lhan-thabs dang bcas-pa*. In DMDZ, vol. 8, fols. 226-233.

BDNS Khyung-po Rnal-'byor, *Bar-do rnam-gsum-gyi zhal-gdams*. In *Sangs-pa Bka'-brgyud-pa Texts: A Collection of Rare Manuscripts of Doctrinal, Ritual, and Biographical Works of Scholars of the Sangs-pa Bka'-brgyud-pa Tradition from the Monastery of Gsang-sngags-cho-gling in Kinnaur*. Sumra, H.P.: Urgyan Dorje, 1977, vol. 1, fols. 263-286. I-Tib-1734; 77-906849.

BDRL Ratna-gling-pa, *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol-gyis gsol-'debs pho-nya myur-mgyogs*. In *Selected Works of Ratna gling pa*. India: Tibetan Nyingmapa Monastery, 1973, vol. 1, fols. 661-667. I-Tib-1041; 73-901830.

BDTT Khetsun Sangpo [Mkhas-btsun-bzang-po], *Biographical Dictionary of Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1973. I-Tib-1119; 73-904404.

BDZH Sgam-po-pa Bsod-nams-rin-chen, *Bar-do'i dmar-khrid-kyi zhal-gdams*. In (1) *Collected Works (Gsuṅ 'bum) of Sgam-po-pa Bsod-nams-rin-chen*. Delhi: Khasdub Gyatsho Shashin, 1975, vol. 2, fols. 53.5-58.5. I-Tib-1478; 75-905460); and (2) *Collected Works (Gsuṅ-'bum) of Sgam-po-pa Bsod-nams-rin-chen*. Darjeeling, West Bengal: Kargyud Sungrab Nyamso Khang, [1982], vol.2, fols. 198.6-207.2. I-Tib-2250; 82-902155.

BPCT *Bonpo Popular Canonical Texts*. Dolanji: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Center, 1974. I-Tib-1240; 74-900987.

BRCB Kun-mkhyen Padma-dkar-po, 'Brug-chen IV, *'Brug-pa chos-'byung* [=*Chos-'byung bstan-pa'i padma rgyas-pa'i nyin-byed*]. Gangs-can Rig-mdzod series no. 19. Lhasa: Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-rnying dpe-skrun-khang, 1992.

BRDS Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, *Bar-do spyi'i-don thams-cad rnam-par gsal-bar byed-pa dran-pa'i me-long*. (1) Solu, Nepal, 1983. N-Tib-4294; 84-901065; in (2) *The Complete Works of Rtse-le Rgod-tshang-pa Padma-legs-grub* (Gangtok, Sikkim: Mgon-po-tshe-brtan, Palace Monastery, 1979, vol. 8, fols. 569-689. I-Tib-1982; 79-904985; and (3) *The Collected Works (Gsung 'bum) of Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol* (New Delhi: Sanje Dorji, 1974, vol. 2, fols. 139-233. I-Tib-1274; 74-901176.

BYNG *Byang-bya-dur (Gnas-ri byang-bya-dur dkar-chag)*. Chengdu: Si-khron zhing-chen zung-chu-rdzong shar-dung-ri shes-rig dpar-khang, 1993.

CHGP Mchog-ldan-mgon-po, *Sprul-sku rig-'dzin mchog-ldan-mgon-po'i rnam-thar mgur-'bum dad-ldan spro-ba bskyed-byed*. Paro: Ugyen Tempai Gyaltsen, 1979. I(Bhu) -Tib-268; 80-902345.

CPYR Anonymous, *Chos-spyod-kyi rim-pa ne-bar mkho-ba*

DJTY Bdud-'joms 'Jigs-bral-ye-shes-rdo-rje, *Rin-chen gter-mdzod-kyi thob-yig*. Dalhor, 1968. I-Tib-1148.

DLSY Ngag-dbang-blo-bzang-rgya-mtsho, Dalai Lama V, *Gsan-yig of the Fifth Dalai Lama. Gsan-yig gaṅgā'i chu-rgyun* [=*Zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thob-yig gaṅgā'i chu-rgyun las glegs-bam gsum-pa*]. 4 volumes. Delhi: Nechung and Lhakhar, 1970: vol. 4, fols. 86.3-91.3. I-Tib-739; 78-918067.

DMDZ 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul Blo-gros-mtha'-yas, *Gdams-ṅag mdzod*

DZSN Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, *Rje-btsun dam-pa rdzogs-chen-pa bsod-nams dbang-po'i rnam-thar mdor-bsdus*. In *The Complete Works of Rtse-le Rgod-tshang-pa Padma-legs-grub*, volume 1, fols. 385-405. Gangtok, Sikkim: Mgon-po-tshe-brtan, Palace Monastery, 1979. I-Tib-1982; 79-904985.

GANG Gangs-ri-ba Chos-dbyings-rdo-rje, *Gangs-mtsho gnas-gsum-gyi lo-rgyus skal-ldan shing-rta*. Beijing: Bod-ljongs-nang-bstan, 1990.

GBNG *Thugs-rje chen-po bar-do mun-sel-gyi sgron-me'i gdams-pa.* In *Gab-pa mngon-byung: A Collection of Ma-ni bka'-'bum Texts.* New Thobgyal: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Centre, 1973, fols. 260-284. I-Tib-1058; 73-903023.

GJGT Bdud-'joms 'Jigs-bral-ye-shes-rdo-rje, *Gang-ljong rgyal-bstan yongs-rdzogs-kyi phyi-ma snga-'gyur rdo-rje theg-pa'i bstan-pa rin-po-che ji-ltar byung-ba'i tshul-dag cing gsal-bar brjod-pa lha-dbang gyul-las rgyud-ba'i rnga-bo-che'i sgra-dbyangs.* In *Collected Works*, vol. 1, no. 2. I-Tib-1905.

GKCB Guru Bkra-shis Ngag-dbang-blo-gros. *Gu-bkra'i chos-'byung* [=*Bstan-pa'i snying-po gsang-chen snga-'gyur nges-don zab-mo'i chos-kyi byung-ba gsal-bar byed-pa'i legs-bshad mkhas-pa dga'-byed ngo-mtshar gtam-gyi rol-mtsho*]. Beijing: Krung-go'i bod-kyi shes-rig dpe-skrun-khang, 1990.

GLKT Jam-dbyangs-rgyal-mtshan, Mkhan-chen. *Rgyal-ba kaḥ-thog-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus* [=*Gsang-chen bstan-pa'i chu-'go rgyal-ba kaḥ-thog-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus rjod-pa 'chi-med lha'i rnga-sgra ngo-mtshar rna-ba'i dga'-ston*]. Chengdu: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1996.

GLRB Bla-ma Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan, *Rgyal-rabs gsal-ba'i me-long.* Lhasa: Bod-ljongs mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1981.

GRLP Ratna-gling-pa, *Guru ratna-gling-pa'i rmi-lam rang-snang 'khrul-grol bar-do gnad-kyi 'phrang-grol zhes-bya-ba mdzod-khang skabs-dgu-pa.* In *Selected Works of Ratna gling pa.* India: Tibetan Nyingmapa Monastery, 1973, vol. 1, pp. 545-557. I-Tib-1041; 73-901830

GTCB Karma-mi-'gyur-dbang-gi-rgyal-po, *Gter-bton brgya-rtsa'i mtshan-sdom gsol-'debs chos-rgyal bkra-shis stobs-rgyal-gyi mdzod-pa las de'i-'brel-pa lo-rgyus gter-bton chos-'byung.* I-Tib-1902.

KCPT *Gangs-can-gyi ljongs-su bka' dang bstan-bcos sogs-kyi glegs-bam spar-gzhi ji-ltar yod-pa rnams nas dkar-chag spar-thor phyogs-tsam du bkod-pa phan-bde'i pad-tshal 'byed-pa'i nyin-byed.* In *Three Karchacks.* Edited by Ngawang Gelek Demo. Gedan Sungrab Minyam Gyunphel Series 13. New Delhi, 1970, fols. 169-243. I-Tib-720.

LGNB Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol-gyi brgyud-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus nor-bu'i phreng-ba.* In T7, vol. 1, fols. 27-48b.

LRCB Ri-bo-che Dpon-tshang (Rta-tshag Tshe-dbang-rgyal), *Lho-rong chos-'byung thub-bstan gsal-byed [=Dam-pa'i chos-kyi byung-ba'i legs-bshad lho-rong chos-'byung ngam rta-tshag chos-'byung zhes rtsom-pa'i yul ming-du chags-pa'i ngo-mtshar-zhing dkon-pa'i dpe khyad-par-can]*. Gangs-can Rig-mdzod series no. 26. Lhasa: Bod-ljongs bod-yig dpe-rnying dpe-skrun-khang, 1994.

LTKG *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol dang thugs-rje chen-po padma zhi-khro las lung-bstan bka'-rgya*. In T7, vol. 1, fols. 521-536 [incomplete].

LZBP Blo-bzang-chos-kyi-rgyal-mtshan, *Bar-do 'phrang-sgrol*. I(Sik)-Tib-39; 71-909698.

MKGR Kun-mkhyen Padma-dkar-po, 'Brug-chen IV, ed., *Mkha'-'gro snyan-brgyud-kyi yig-rnying*. Darjeeling, West Bengal: Kargyud Sungrab Nyamso Khang, 1982. I-Tib-2249; 82-902170.

MLAM Mi-la-ras-pa, *Lam blo-nas gcod-pa bar-do ngo-sprod-kyi gdams-ngag zab-mo*. In (1) MKGR, vol. 2, fols. 99-128; and (2) *Rare Dkar-brgyud-pa Texts from the Library of Ri-bo-che Rje-drung of Padma-bkod*. Tezu, A.P.: Tibetan Nyingmapa Monastery, 1974, fols. 47-76. I-Tib-1293; 74-901474).

MLGB Gtsang-smyon He-ru-ka Sangs-rgyas-rgyal-mtshan, *Mi-la'i mgur-'bum*. Dharamsala: Sherig Parkhang, 1990. I-Tib-2436; 83-907128.

NBDS Kun-bzang-nges-don-klong-yangs, *Bod-du byung-ba'i gsang-sngags snga-'gyur-gyi bstan-'dzin skyes-mchog rim-byon-gyi rnam-thar nor-bu'i do-shal*. I-Tib-1633.

NGB *Rnying-ma rgyud-'bum*. (1) Mtshams-brag edition in 46 volumes, Thim-phu, 1982. I(Bhu)-Tib-313; 82-902165; (2) Gting-skyes edition in 36 volumes, Thim-phu, 1973. I(Bhu)-Tib-9; 73-903590.

NPBD Zhang G.yu-brag-pa Brtson-'grus-grags-pa, *Na-ro-pa'i bar-do'i gdam-ngag la bar-do rnam-pa-gsum*. In *bKa'-'bum (Collected Works)*. Nepalese National Archives microfilm collection, L448/2-L450/4, vol. 4, fols. 181-186.

OGTL Chos-rje Dge-'dun-rgyal-mtshan, *O-rgyan rin-po-che'i gter-ston lung-bstan dang khung-btsun-pa bla-ma brgyud-pa'i rim-pa rnams*. In T7, vol. 1, fols. 21-26.

PGKR Kun-bzang-bde-chen-rdo-rje, Lha-lung Gsung-sprul VIII. *Pad-gling 'khrungs-rabs-kyi rtogs-brjod nyung-gsal dad-pa'i me-tog*. In *Rediscovered Teachings of the Great Padma-gling-pa*, vol. 14, fols. 511-600. Thimphu: Kunsang Tobgay, 1975-1976. I(Bhu)-Tib-27; 75-903254.

PHMO Phag-mo-gru-pa Rdo-rje-rgyal-po, *Phag-mo gru-pa rdo-rje rgyal-po bka'-'bum*, vol. 3, fols. 209-211. Incipit: *slob-dpon chen po la ba-pa'i bar-do rnam-pa gsum*. A golden manuscript prepared under the patronage of 'Bri-gung Kun-dga'-rin-chen in the possession of Dan Martin.

PLKC Dom-po-pa Thub-bstan-rgyal-mtshan, *Rnying-ma'i gsung-'bum dkar-chag*. Lhasa: Bod-ljongs gsar-dpe dpe-skrun-khang, 1992.

PMKT O-rgyan-gling-pa. *Padma bka'-thang-yig* [=*O-rgyan guru padma-'byung-gnas-kyi skyes-rabs rnam-par thar-pa rgyas-par bkod-pa padma bka'i-thang-yig*]. Chengdu: Si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1993.

RCBP 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul, *Zab-mo'i gter dang gter-ston grub-thob ji-ltar byon-pa'i lo-rgyus mdor-bsdus bkod-pa rin-chen baiḍurya'i phreng-ba*. In RCTD, vol. 1, fols. 291-759

RCKC 'Jam-mgon-kong-sprul-blo-gros-mtha'-yas, *Rin-chen gter-mdzod-gyi dkar-chag*. In RCTD, vol.

RCTD 'Jam-mgon Kong-sprul, *Rin-chen gter-mdzod*. I(Bhu)-Tib-124; 77-900739.

RZND Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa, *The Collected Rediscovered Teachings of Rig-'dzin Nyi-ma-grags-pa with Rituals of the Char Nyi-grags Tradition*. 2 volumes. Bir, H.P.: Pema Lodoe, 1979. I-Tib-2066; 80-900308.

SHAR Kaḥ-thog-pa Bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan. *Sar kaḥ-thog-pa bsod-nams-rgyal-mtshan dpal-bzang-po'i rnam-par thar-pa dri-med yid-bzhin nor-bu'i phreng-ba*. Gangtok, Sikkim, 1979. I-Tib-2068; 80-900328.

SITU Kaḥ-thog Si-tu Chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, *Gangs-ljongs dbus-gtsang gnas-bskor lam-yig nor-bu zla-shel-gyi se-mo-do*. Tashijong, Palampur, 1972. I-Tib-875; 72-901801.

TBZB Rgya-ra-ba Nam-mkha'-chos-kyi-rgya-mtsho, *Zab-chos zhi-khro dgongs-pa rang-grol-gyi them-byang zin-bris*. In T7, vol. 1, fols. 1-6.

THGL Dkar-brgyud Bstan-'dzin-nor-bu, *Thos-grol dgag-len*. In *The Collected Works of Dkar-brgyud Bstan-'dzin-nor-bu*. Smanrtsis shesrig Spendzod 142. Leh, Ladakh: D.L. Tashigang, 1996, fols. 315-414.

THUP Thupten Sangay [Thub-bstan-sangs-rgyas], *Bod-mi'i 'das-mchod*. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 1974.

TLNT Gter-bdag-gling-pa, *Gter-chen chos-kyi rgyal-po'i rnam-thar dad-pa'i shing-rta*. In *The Life of Gter-bdag-gliṅ-pa 'Gyur-med-rdo-rje of Smin-grol-gliṅ*. 2 volumes. Paro, Bhutan: Lama Ngodrub and Sherab Drimey, 1982. I(Bhu)-Tib-320; 82-902941, vol. 1, fols. 1-355.

TLSY Gter-bdag-gling-pa, *Gsan-yig of Gter-bdag-gling-pa 'Gyur-med-rdo-rje of Smin-grol-gling* [=*Zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i dam-pa'i chos-kyi thob-yig rin-chen byung-gnas*]. Delhi: Sanje Dorje, 1974. I-Tib-1243.

TMLG Anonymous [=Sha-gzugs-pa Ngag-dbang-bkra-shis-rnam-rgyal?], *Gter-ma'i lo-rgyus gter-ston chos-'byung nor-bu'i 'phreng-ba*. Photocopy of manuscript provided by E. Gene Smith and the Himalayan & Inner Asian Resource Center, 1998.

TSLG Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, *Rtse-le gong-'od grwa-tshang-dgon gsum-po rnams-kyi bstan-pa ji-ltar btsugs-pa'i lo-rgyus*. In *The Complete Works of Rtse-le Rgod-tshang-pa Padma-legs-grub*, volume 1, fols. 313-383. Gangtok, Sikkim: Mgon-po-tshe-brtan, Palace Monastery, 1979. I-Tib-1982; 79-904985.

TSNG Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol, *Snyigs-dus-kyi bla-ma'i gzugs-brnyan 'dzin-pas rang-gi mtshan-nyid ji-lta-bar brjod-pa drang-po'i sa-bon (rnam-thar)*. In (1) *The Complete Works of Rtse-le Rgod-tshang-pa Padma-legs-grub*, volume 1, fols. 1-200. Gangtok, Sikkim: Mgon-po-tshe-brtan, Palace Monastery, 1979. I-Tib-1982; 79-904985; and in (2) *The Collected Works (Gsung 'bum) of Rtse-le Sna-tshogs-rang-grol*, vol. 1, fols. 1-166. New Delhi, 1974. I-Tib-1274; 74-901176.

VGB *Vairo-rgyud-'bum*. Tashi Y. Tashigangpa, ed. *The Rgyud-'bum of Vairocana*. Leh, Ladakh: S.W. Tashigangpa, 1971.

YANG Dbyangs-can-dga'-ba'i-blo-gros, *Bar-do'i 'phrang-sgrol-gyi gsol-'debs 'jigs-sgrol dba'-po zhes-bya-ba'i 'grel-pa gdams-ngag gsal-ba'i sgron-me*. (1) I-Tib 74-926906 and (2) *Collected Works of A-kya Yongs-'dzin*, vol. 1.

YGLG Yang-dgon-pa-rgyal-mtshan (Lha-gdong-pa), *The Collected Works of Yang-dgon-pa rgyal-mtshan-dpal*. Thimphu, Bhutan: Kunsang Topgey, 1976.

ZBNA Tsong-kha-pa Blo-bzang-grags-pa, *Zab-lam nā-ro'i chos-drug-gi sgo-nas 'khrid-pa'i rim-pa yid-ches gsum-ldan*. In (1) *The Collected Works (Gsuṅ 'bum) of The Incomparable Lord Tsoṅ-kha-pa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa*. Delhi, 1978, vol. 9, fols. 84.5-98.5. I-Tib-1809; and (2) *The Collected Works (Gsuṅ 'bum) of Rje Tsoṅ-kha-pa Blo-bzaṅ-grags-pa*. Delhi: Ngawang Gelek Demo, 1979, vol. 13, no. 9, fols. 489.3-503.6. I-Tib-1481; 75-905462.

ZCGT Zhe-chen Rgyal-tshab Padma-rnam-rgyal. *Zhe-chen rgyal-tshab chos-'byung [=Snga-'gyur rdo-rje theg-pa gtso-bor gyur-pa'i sgrub-brgyud shing-rta brgyad-kyi byung-ba brjod-pa'i gtam mdor-bsdus legs-bshad padma dkar-po'i rdzing-bu]*. Chengdu: Si-khron mi-rigs dpe-skrun-khang, 1994.

ZDTY Phyogs-las-rnam-rgyal, Zhabs-drung Gsung-sprul I, *Zab-rgyas chos-kyi thob-yig dbyangs-can mgrin-rgyan*. Thimphu, Bhutan: Druk Sherig Press, 1984. I(Bhu)-Tib-390; 85-902180.

ZHAB Zhabs-dkar-ba Tshogs-drug-rang-grol, *Snyigs-dus 'gro-ba yongs-kyi skyabs-mgon zhabs-dkar rdo-rje-'chang chen-po'i rnam-par thar-pa rgyas-par bshad-pa skal-bzang gdul-bya thar-'dod rnams-kyi re-ba skong-ba'i yid-bzhin-gyi nor-bu bsam-'phel dbang-gi rgyal-po*. Xining, 1985.

ZHKS Dbyangs-can-dga'-ba'i-blo-gros, *Gzhi'i-sku-gsum-gyi rnam-gzhag rab-gsal sgron-me*. In *Collected Works of A-kya Yongs-'dzin*. Delhi, 1971, vol. 1.

ZHRL *Dbang-ldan zhu-yi ring-lugs-kyi zhi-khro'i sgrub-skor*. Dolanji: Tibetan Bonpo Monastic Center, 1975. I-Tib-1420; 75-903251.

ZKGK *Zhi-khro sgrub-skor glegs-bam-gyi dbu'i-rdul-len thar-lam 'dren-byed*. Delhi: 1968. I-Tib-761; 76-924678.

ZKND 'Ja-tshon-snying-po, *Zhi-khro nges-don snying-po*. In *Rig-'dzin 'ja'-tshon snying-po'i gter-chos*. Bylakuppe, c.1997.

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